THE COMMONWEAL

A Weekly Review of Literature, The Arts and Public Affairs

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CATHOLIC EDUCATION WEEK

DURING the week of November 9 to 15 the Catholic schools of the country will have special exercises and studies in connection with American Education Week. The general subject of the program drawn up by the Department of Education of the National Catholic Welfare Conference is "Catholic Action." Each day of the week a special aspect is given prominence, beginning with a study of the meaning of Catholic Action, and continuing through applications of its principles to education, student life, the home, economic life, civic life and religious life. The program seems to us to be admirably designed, none the less so because it is intended to be suggestive rather than mandatory, the teachers who are to apply it being left free to make suitable adaptations. What comments we offer are in no sense intended as adverse reflections upon the present, or past, value of our Catholic schools, but, fully recognizing the high degree of that value, we would desire to do our part in urging upon our teachers, for their consideration, a thing of primary importance regarding the future of Catholic education.

It is, of course, only a coincidence that those to whom Catholic teachers, and all other minor workers in Catholic Action, look for inspiration and guidance, our bishops, will be meeting in conference during the Catholic Action week of our schools. But it is more than a mere coincidence that both the conference and the special program of the schools are being held at one of those turning points in human history which come at intervals of centuries, when one epoch gives place to something new and strange. For we take it for granted that all who observe the world situation, and who are not incurable obscurantists, agree that this situation is no minor crisis, no mere economic depression, nor complex of temporary political difficulties, but rather a profound and world-wide readjustment of social conditions. What shape the new order may take, and whether it will be for good, or for evil, are questions which none can answer—but for that very reason, the necessity, and the duty, of exerting all possible efforts to shape the future bear more directly upon Catholics than upon any other body of men and women. This fact springs directly from the central truth of Catholicism, namely, that it is a force initiated by God Himself, directly and personally, in the form of His undying and infallible Church, for the supreme guidance of humanity. No other body, or school, makes that claim, no matter how zealous they may be in pro-

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moting their own programs. It is unique. And perhaps at no other time has it been more drastically challenged, more strongly opposed, than now.

Not merely is it true that the Catholic teaching as to the true order of human values, and the methods for attaining them, have been cast aside almost completely in recent centuries, by the nations living outside of any allegiance to the Church, but also it is true that within many nations once wholly Catholic, such as France, Italy, Spain and Mexico, there are revolts, or even persecutions, which menace the further hold upon the people of those lands of the moral, intellectual and spiritual authority of the Church. In particular, these refusals or rebellions affect the Church in the most vital of all its links with humanity, its teaching of the young. No wonder, then, if the significance of Catholic Action week in our schools can be described without any exaggeration as being of primary importance.

Let it also be said, that we should frankly, freely, honestly acknowledge a truth which every page of Catholic history since its beginning proclaims, namely, that when and where Catholicism, once established (we do not necessarily mean, by legal means, but rather firmly rooted in the hearts of men), has been thrust aside, or badly hampered in carrying on its divine work, after all due allowances have been made for wholly exterior causes, the main reason for such a fall, or such a decline, has been the moral, intellectual or spiritual fault of Catholics themselves. This is a truth which keen as its edge may be, and bitter as its taste, nevertheless bears with it a great and consolatory meaning, namely, that Catholics themselves have the remedy in their own hands for the disasters and depressions from which they, and the world about them, suffer when the guiding light of the Church is dimmed, and humanity goes astray in the darkness, or, as Dryden said, follows those vain sparkles which human pride strikes forth for itself.

Never before has the truth concerning Catholic influence in our own country been so clearly and realistically recognized as now, when our own civilization shows those premonitory creakings and strainings of the changing epoch which is at hand for all the world. That influence is very weak: in public affairs it is well nigh negligible; in literature, the press, and intellectual life in general, it is minor to a degree that is shocking when our numerical strength and wordly prosperity are concerned. It is for Catholic Action to accept the fact as a challenge, not as a condemnation. And especially so in our schools. And not just for one week—for the whole year, and every year thereafter.

Probably our theologians would tell us that sin—the main cause of all social as well as individual failures—is the chief reason for our lack of operative force in society: the sin of not living up to the teachings of our faith. Doubtless, too, they would recommend works and deeds meet for repentance. There has been much lip-service to the ideals of Catholic Action. It is time now for deeds.

WEEK BY WEEK

THE CONSENSUS of opinion, as well as of such reports as the government at Washington saw fit to give out for public consumption, was that the visit of Premier Laval with President Hoover was productive of nothing very definite or new in the way of plans, but would be mutually helpful to these statesmen in their day-by-day handling of the great problems before them. Superficially this seems altogether reasonable, and in view of the forms of government in the two countries, which make the executives dependent on the one hand on Congress, and on the other, on the French Chamber of Deputies and the Senate, caution in what they assumed to do would be essential to the later realization in fact of any agreements they may have arrived at. Actually, M. Laval in his quiet way took home the bacon for which he had come these thousands of miles from Paris. This was, first, the agreement that Mr. Hoover would not again initiate intransigent action such as resulted in his one-year moratorium, but would leave to the European powers any initiative in the matter of Germany's ability to pay, and second, a veiled, but seemingly a none the less definite, assurance that Mr. Hoover and Mr. Mellon and Mr. Mills have only been bluffing in their brave words about there being no relationship between intergovernmental debts and German reparations.

A Flitch for France

NO DOUBT as regards the first point, Mr. Hoover sighed with relief and felt that he had let himself out rather easily from the serious responsibilities he had assumed in the international scene which might have domestic repercussions in the shape of increased taxes. No doubt he was able to gaze up again with an untroubled brow at the picture of George Washington and to look happily through the west windows of the White House with the refrain of "no entangling alliances" ringing pleasantly in his ears. As regards the other point, which is implicit, if not explicit, in the sixth paragraph of the joint statement, in the linking without qualification of intergovernmental obligations with the deputizing of the European powers to initiate an extension of the Hoover moratorium, we wish there could have been a little clear speaking on the gentlemanly obligation, if not the actual moral obligation, of debtors to assume to pay their debts without making qualifications which were not a part of the original agreements by which the loans were obtained. France has assumed a high moral tone in its defense of the inviolability of treaties, and we recommend the same clear attitude on the subject of the debts. This does not mean to say, that we wish to press our position as Uncle Shylock, but we believe a recognition of these things is necessary to that firm grip upon reality and that dispersal of uneasiness and suspicion, which could be the prelude to effective acts not only of justice on the part of the United States, but also of generosity.

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However, M. Laval has now sailed with the bacon, and there can be no doubt that although he would be extremely polite if we asked to have some of it back, he also would be firm.

Troubled Waters

CLOUDS rolling up in the Orient have impelled Western powers to invoke the authority of the League of Nations and the Kellogg Pact. To date, nothing decisive has been accomplished, though the steps taken by Mr. Stimson to express the attitude of Washington are accepted in many quarters as a fairly new diplomatic departure. For days the argument between papers committed to isolation and papers foresworn to some kind of international co-action waxed hot, seemingly without much eventual effect on anybody or anything. The scene of conflict is Manchuria—Chinese territory in which both Russia and Japan have certain rights assigned by treaties. Bandit-ridden China is perennially infringing upon one of those rights or its corollaries. A while ago it was Russia which figured in the argument; today it is Japan. The chances are that (as in the Russian instance) concessions will eventually dispose of the issue, more or less of bloodshed being merely a form of red ink with which to underscore a compromise. One of the most interesting commentaries on the situation is that quoted by the *Literary Digest* from the Berlin *Vossische Zeitung*. This explains the paradox of Japanese military action even while the Japanese government was advertising its pacific desires, by saying: "The Japanese government has no authority or power over the Japanese military forces. Those who know eastern Asia know this too—alas!" In other words, the army and navy are not subject to the Tokio government, but to the emperor alone. Under this convenient arrangement, guns and orators may speak divergently.

Disappointed Railroads

IN AN exceedingly interesting decision, the Interstate Commerce Commission denied the appeal of railroads for a 15 percent rate increase. Two questions had been submitted: How are the roads to earn both the cost of service and a fair return on their money, and how are wage payments as well as security values to be upheld? Each part of these queries is of national importance. If, under the influence of the depression, service and maintenance are curtailed, the country's transportation plant may become only relatively efficient, or even very inefficient. A battle over wage reductions would, of course, endanger the public safety and undermine the immediate earning capacity of the system. Railway securities are likewise a fundamental fiscal problem. Considered among the safest of investments, these securities have shrunken in value until their dependability as savings-bank backlogs has been gravely impaired. The commission did not deny the rightness of these contentions, but it held that a 15 percent rate increase would not be a satisfactory recourse. Such immediate relief as it afforded took the form of a rather elaborate plan for pooling the revenues emanating from a certain number of rate improvements. This plan the railroads must take or leave by December 1. It plainly has no purpose beyond its attempt to keep weaker lines solvent.

THE MAJOR emphasis is laid, in the decision, upon the future. Arguing that times of business decline are inevitably accompanied by decreased earnings, the commission recognizes the "principle that inasmuch as railroad earnings must inevitably fall below normal in times of depression, they may properly be permitted to rise above normal in times of prosperity." Thus there would accumulate a surplus, some part of which ought to be held in liquid form. Furthermore this general declaration is made: "While the tide may be slow in turning, there is no more reason for thinking that business will not improve than there was in 1928 for thinking that depressions were a thing of the past and that we were in an era of permanent prosperity." In short, the commission does not recognize the current disturbance as a "crisis of the system" but only as a downward swing of the business cycle, comparable to those of which history took due notice during the past two centuries. Therefore, it concludes, the position of the railroads is bound to improve, since they are really in a very sound condition. Problems remain, but can be solved by coöperation. One can only say that if these assumptions are correct, time will remedy all things. It follows clearly that as a consequence the Interstate Commerce Commission need not do so.

Women's Work

WOMEN now control, according to data recently compiled, about 40 percent of the wealth in this country, and the figure is going up. This measure of financial independence, unparalleled anywhere before, is the symbol of corresponding possibilities in all those fields that feminists have claimed to be woman's province no less than man's. It is therefore an appropriate time for American feminists to pause, to take stock of those doctrines and demands of theirs, and to ask themselves whether, in that future which promises so definitely to favor them, they will be content to go on asserting that women can do whatever men can do, and should be allowed to do it. Is this platform broad enough? Are there not, in the light of human history, other, indispensable services that women are fitted, and exclusively fitted, to perform? Thus, in part, runs "A Word to Women," which Mr. Albert Jay Nock addresses to the sex from the rostrum of the *Atlantic Monthly*. It is obviously interesting for many reasons: the startling statement about women's wealth alone invites very special consideration. However, we remark here, not Mr. Nock's premises, or the question he raises, but the answer he himself goes on to supply. That we find interesting not only because Mr. Nock is one of the most interest-

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ing of present-day radical thinkers, but because it curiously approximates the best and completest conservatism in this passionately and lengthily debated matter of "woman's place."

MR. CHESTERTON, for example, certainly does not want women out in the world doing "whatever men can do." But that is not, it may fairly be presumed from his whole context, because he doubts women's ability. He is deeply respectful of women's ability. What he doubts is society's ability to pay the price of sending women out into the world. If they undertake to do men's work, they must give up women's work, and no one can do women's work except women. This is a good deal like Mr. Nock's contention, though he does not draw his lines so tightly. And when he particularizes by calling women's work the function of "civilizing," we suggest that that is his feminist rendering of Mr. Chesterton's term "home-making." It is not a complete translation, of course: Mr. Chesterton's sacramental idea of the home as built about the child is solider and deeper than Mr. Nock's idea of the place or point from which the woman works—home, let us call it also—as a generator and diffuser of comfort, gracious order, amenity and social discipline. But it is fair to say that Mr. Chesterton's idea includes secondarily all that is essential in Mr. Nock's; and that, we feel, is important for Mr. Nock, for the thinkers he represents, and for the groups they influence. If even a few of the advance guard of modern feminism have progressed to the point where they see in the home, not (as twenty-five years ago) a cage or a crutch for women, not (as five years ago) a place to eat and sleep, but a positive, out-giving unit or force, with a vital office in society, that is a good deal. It is the recovery of at least the dim outline of the only valid social topography. In time its primary feature —the child—may also be restored.

Salzburg Summer

SOME time ago we referred to a course of lectures given during the past summer at the University of Salzburg, Austria; and we may now add that the widespread interest shown in the matter indicates both that many Americans are interested in this idea and that some brief comment on what was actually done may now be in order. This "summer university" was a new thing in Europe: for the first time in many centuries, Catholic scholars from several countries assembled at a new Catholic university, as yet in the making, to seek a way toward something like a synthesis. To be sure, the greater part of the audience was Austrian or German, and the majority of the lecturers likewise came from Austrian or German universities. Yet it was characteristic that Professor Bullough's lectures on Dante were very particularly appreciated, and that the manner in which Maritain and P. Gemelli discussed philosophy complemented so well the different methods of their German confrères. Some who attended remarked that while unity was attained on the basis of Catholic life—social and spiritual—it was proved once again that the very nature of the "culture" sponsored by the Church is an admirable liberality, which proposes the diamond rather than the facet. This endeavor was Salzburg's first great stride forward. May there be many others!

Attitude toward the Theatre

THE MORAL subversiveness of a great deal that goes on in the theatre today is something about which much is said, but little seemingly is done. The crux of the problem is, of course, like good government in a democracy, dependent not on inspired special efforts, but on the general level of public demands. And certainly any quantitative and qualitative analysis of the American public today would have to take into account the preponderance of irreligion, a mounting divorce rate and declining birth rate, and a secularized, highly theoretical and confused, but vaguely consoling, body of pseudo-scientific doctrine, the basis of which is the denial of free will and personal responsibility, and the shifting of responsibility to anything from environment, pre-natal influence, instinct or the libido, to the state or federal government. With the libido, instead of conscience, enthroned in the public's consciousness, it is practically an irresistible effect to have nudity enthroned in the revue type of production, subtle moralizing against morals in the serious plays, and a bold trifling with the lowest instincts in the comedies. The real front of the warfare against this sort of thing extends to all the daily effort of every parish priest and every educator throughout the length and breadth of the land, to instil positive faith, the love of God and of virtue, in the breasts of his flock, so that though they may not be the preponderant force in public demand, they shall be a well-disciplined and respected minority. The new president of the Catholic Actors Guild, Gerald Griffin, has already shown splendid conviction and courage in speaking up for the fundamental beliefs of the Catholic public. And it is to be hoped that emphasis will be put on the writing and production of the sort of plays that this public will gladly support, and that will disseminate the truths of which they are custodians, rather than on crying down and vicariously publicizing the lewd and futile.

Wise Mr. Milne

PLEASANT is the news that Mr. A. A. Milne is coming to these shores, and doubly pleasant the news that he refuse to lecture when he gets here. This we say in direct face of our certainty (nourished on a delighted reading of practically every word Mr. Milne has written) that he would be a lecturer of tact and charm. But we all know by now that an imponderable but powerful influence pervades any assemblage in which the parties of the first and second parts are, respectively, a British lecturer and a Yankee audience. It plays upon him, so that he opens

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his mouth and says what he did not mean to say, or what he meant to say in a totally different way than he meant to say it. It plays upon them, making them hear what was not said, and especially what was not intended. The trouble, we suspect, is those great common possessions—the language, the jury system, the Bill of Rights—which are supposed to draw the two peoples together. They do draw them together: just near enough (since the two peoples are abysmally different) to quarrel. The lecturer feels near enough the audience to give them a little brotherly advice; the audience feels near enough the lecturer to expect from him admiration tinged with affectionate envy. A rare few Englishmen have overcome the handicap, but in general the wise man will not even try. "I never lectured and I never will," says Mr. Milne. He has millions of American admirers. Let him stick to his story and they will stick to him.

Treating the Insane

AFTER Dr. Charles H. Mayo's statement on the increase of insanity, recently noted in these columns, many will take comfort in an interview which the New York *Sun* makes public with Dr. George A. Smith, a member of the governor's Lunacy Commission, and superintendent of the state hospital for the insane at Central Islip, Long Island. Dr. Smith's observations over nearly fifty years' service as a state medical officer, have left him hopeful of the ultimate conquest of insanity. In his view, the diagnosis and treatment of young children in whom a congenital strain of mental illness is suspected or known to exist, is the most important advance made in the field. Much is already being done with such cases, he affirms, to prevent later breakdowns. He cites also the steady improvement in the whole technique of treatment, in the way of carefully directed occupation and recreation, and of cheerful environment. His own practice, which is to provide his community with a way of living "modeled as nearly as possible on the activities of normal persons," has been strikingly successful. By the records, "during one year recently, 25 percent of the patients recovered completely and went out as normal individuals capable of useful work; 50 percent were paroled for a year, and of those paroled, 42 percent remained out." Here, as everywhere, there is no substitute for individual devotion and individual genius. It is in the service of men of Dr. Smith's quality that a chief hope of medical science in this field rests.

Stop, Look, Listen!

FALLING in the bathtub, we learn from the National Safety Congress, is almost as dangerous as walking across the street. The number of fatalities from automobiles, we had been led to believe, stood monumentally above all others, even those attributed to crime. Faced with the constant emphasis in the newspapers and on billboards and street signs, of the dangers out of doors, we had pictured the average citizen as leading the life of a hunted rabbit, glad when he could scuttle back into the confines of his home. Here at least, we thought, he was safe. Now we learn that in 1930, there were 30,000 fatalities in the home, only 3,000 less than those caused in the United States by automobiles. Besides slipping in the bathtub, falling downstairs, upsetting scalding liquids, blowing out the gas, touching exposed wires and using explosives to clean stoves and clothing, were given as the most common causes of domestic accidents.

MR. EDISON AND SCIENCE

TIME and place were alike kindly to Mr. Edison, but he welded their bounty to his own invincible, inflexible energy. How native to the United States it all seems—this story of a poor boy who won a prize for saving a child from death by an oncoming train, and with the proceeds began that process of relentless self-education which eventually made him the best-known and most representative American. The electro-technic industry—with its ramifications the greatest of all modern enterprises—reckoned with him at every stage of its growth; and yet he was born into a world that hardly suspected the possibility of such a development. There were no electric lights before he invented them as a mature man; but he lived to see kerosene and candles out of date even in equatorial Africa. Recording human sound was voted a species of magic until he had puzzled out the laws of a phonographic disc; and yet, before he was old, "canned sound" became almost as normal a commodity as air. In short: the wilderness was about his cradle, and the new age had reached a measure of maturity before his death.

To what extent is this change attributable to Mr. Edison? In how far is it the definite contribution of America? The answer must reckon with the curious fact that none of this man's inventions were based on deep knowledge of scientific law, or even upon strictly original ideas. Austrian, French and other inventors had been pottering around for years with these self-same devices, either unable to develop them beyond the stage of theory or powerless to secure adequate industrial support. And the truth of the matter was that Europe, in those days, was content to think it had advanced far enough. It was tired speculating on the possible social results of inventions which would throw long-established habits out of gear, and possibly disturb long-fought-for public equilibrium. But the United States, a new continent of enormous distances and expanding population, welcomed every new technical improvement enthusiastically. The whole attitude of the New World toward the forces of nature seems to have been congealed in Edison. He grappled with virtually every species of practical science, but by instinct he knew that he would be most at home in the virtually unexplored fields.

Again the Edison point of view was that of the aver-

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age man. He was interested in the lofty formulae, the dizzy hypotheses, with which great thinkers sought to express what observation had revealed of fundamental cosmic happenings; but it never occurred to him that such scrutiny of their findings as he himself might attempt would prove valuable. In like manner his reflections on the subject of religion mirrored with quite uncanny accuracy the mind of his fellow citizen. Born and reared in surroundings to which God's existence was the most plain and sacred of facts, he faced the modern critique of theology with simple but honest bewilderment. He had to tell himself that the simple evidence upon which his generation had relied would not bear up under the attack of sophisticated criticism; and since he had no deeper philosophic or mystical experience, there was no weapon in his armory with which to do successful battle. And yet that something which remained human, beautifully mortal, in Edison and his time simply would not release the hold these men had on the fringes of Divinity. The attitude of their generation of Americans was always a forward-looking attitude: the feeling still abides within them that the purpose of the soul is, after all, not served by death. Science, in the meaning of the time, had obscured the glass through which they darkly apprehended, but there was still that which shone through, faintly, from beyond.

At any rate, this "problem" of faith was one Edison could not solve. And there were contingent problems. It was not until the great inventor was dying that modern society began to realize the quite problematical nature of technological improvement. How pleasant it had been at first—this refashioning of the natural order in which men had lived for many, many thousands of years! Fire and heat, travel and the carrying of burdens, tools and immemorial handicraft, all were swept into the discard as new reservoirs of dynamism could be tapped for energy and comfort. The jarring this occasioned was resented merely by the inactive, artists and the like. Only gradually did the need for control manifest itself. Ugliness was an unheeded warning: that, one was assured, would disappear of its own momentum, once the secrets of a new form inherent in technique itself had been learned. Nor were strife and greed more than sources of passing dismay. It was not until the social results of non-control were clear that men commenced to doubt. Today Europe is rife with almost boundless scepticism; and though the younger nations—Russia and the United States—are less uneasy, they too have manifestly begun to lose faith. Are not the difficulties to be surmounted well-nigh greater than the advantages gained? Is this civilization destined to create madness, poverty and revolution, or are the "blessings" which Edison and others placed at the disposal of the masses genuine advantages which have merely been "misused"?

It seems to us that the answer lies in a critique of the purposes entertained by the "inventive generation." If the novelties, the conveniences, the sources of energy, the wealth, created by genius in the service of civilization, were thought of as purely "material" acquisitions, then of course they were entirely without adjustment to the permanent objectives of human personality. When God is remote from an epoch, then that is simply in disorder. There is, from this point of view, a great difference in value between even very imperfect conceptions of Him and forgetfulness. Ancient Africa had a quite obscure apprehension of the Divine Essence, and yet ancient Africa had so much of order as its theology afforded. But the Western world of the eighteen-sixties, which began to tell itself that heaven was something like a hypothetical cosmic south pole no man could explore, thereby committed itself to ignoring ends and norms. What saved it was the remnant of religion so touchingly evident in Mr. Edison's career —a remnant we no longer possess.

But those of us who feel that God is active in human history and that He lets us find what, from the beginning, He has ordained we should find, may well fear—this world alone seems correct—that we have been singularly indifferent to the true significance of technical civilization. After all, why have the mysteries which science has unveiled been revealed to our time? Is it not because—quite apart from the sociological necessities which have been, in a measure, provided by invention—the time was ripe for a new manifestation of the Divine plan? Science has added so much to man's insight into the world and its laws that the total effect is almost comparable with that of a barbarian chieftain's raid on a great city. Much must be done, years must pass, before the booty can so much as be sorted. Unless all signs fail, we are now entering a period during which this sifting and realigning will be the major concern.

Perhaps, however, it is only when we confront the sociological results of the Edison era that our situation becomes wholly clear. Humanity had for nearly a hundred years denied the truth that man is never the servant of man. The possibilities inherent in the new technology are, theoretically, bread and shelter to millions whom the globe could not otherwise support. It is invention only which enables a society to cease being static in number—at the price of adapting itself to a kinetic civilization. Nevertheless even these possibilities have been denied. The collapse of social responsibility—or the failure of the humanitarian ideal to survive in mid-air, after being sundered from the Divine Ideal—is nowhere more apparent than in the pessimism with which the masses estimate the future of their children. Sometimes it seems as if we are confronting the greatest of tragedies: the tragedy that the means Divinely afforded to make life possible have been misused to render life impossible. Manifestly, however, we are now merely at the end of an era, on the bridge of transition. The answer given to the fate of man will depend upon how that which survived in Edison, virtually despite his time, is transformed into a new doctrine and an unsuspected grace.

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RAPPROCHEMENT

By MAX JORDAN

JULES CAMBON, then French ambassador to Germany, left Berlin on August 4, 1914, having been handed his passports. On the eve of his departure he ventured the statement that there must be an armed conflict between Germany and France every forty to fifty years, because after the conclusion of each period the generation which had witnessed the horrors of the last war would have died out.

These words were spoken seventeen years ago. Since then the war which was supposed to end war has been fought. A peace fraught with even more serious dangers for future conflicts has been imposed upon the vanquished. Briand and Stresemann have made a supreme effort at Locarno to bring about an equilibrium in the relations of their two countries. And still there is talk of war. The frontiers on the Rhine are almost ironclad with heavier armaments than ever before. Will the warning of Jules Cambon be justified? Can there never be a lasting peace between the two major powers of Europe?

Laval and Briand came to Berlin as the guests of the German government to repay the visit of the German Chancellor and his Foreign Secretary to Paris. Once more the interest of the world was focused on the Franco-German problem. Jules Cambon's tragic prophecy must not come true. If the present-day civilization of Europe is to be preserved, if chaos politically and economically is to be prevented, France and Germany must get together. The gulf of misunderstanding must be bridged.

There is no use concealing the difficulties of the task. Although neighbors, the two countries are as far apart from one another as though nature had laid wide oceans between them. In language, temperament, outlook on life—in practically every essential respect the French and the Germans constitute a living contrast. The same is probably true of Germans and Italians. Yet those two nations seem to fit into a unity of purpose, one complementing the other intellectually and temperamentally. Between Germany and France, however, stands a tradition of antagonism bearing the heavy load of centuries. To run counter to it a tenacious faith in a better future is required, a faith which won't weaken even under temporary setbacks.

Let us analyze the present status. Official French policy starts from the fundamental premise of Germany's exclusive war guilt. The crime that, to her mind, was premeditated and wilfully committed by the German people merits an indefinite punishment, one to last beyond the generation of 1914, one which should be felt by the children and the children's children of those who fought the war. For France, the tragic reality of 1914 remains the reality of today. For her the international outlook has not changed since Versailles.

In Germany, on the other hand, the new generation which has arisen since the end of the war and which did not have any share in it does not feel itself responsible either for its outbreak or for its consequences. This new and younger generation finds many of its natural opportunities barred through the stipulations which remapped all of Europe. It senses the helplessness of the country and suffers under the humiliation of national pride as inflicted through what appears virtually as foreign financial control.

To France this restless and dissatisfied neighbor constitutes a permanent challenge. To her peace and security have become synonyms of the European status quo. But to Germany this very status appears as oppressive and intolerable. She insists on the necessity of applying sooner or later Article 19 of the Covenant for the revision of those treaty provisions which developments since have shown to be untenable. Thus we have the contrast between the dynamic attitude of Germany and the static tendencies of France.

But the contrast is not limited by the implications of Versailles. It goes deeper in its origins, to the very basis of the social structure of the two countries. It is the natural self-sufficiency of the French people and the expensive power of the Germans which make for the instinctive antagonism of one against the other. Germany's population has been on the increase ever since the establishment of the Reich. That of France for decades has remained almost stationary. For the same period it can be seen that France has maintained the level of some forty million people, while the other countries of Europe have practically doubled their population figures. Germany and England in particular were forced to develop their home industries and to push vigorously their export trade, in order to give employment to their increasing population, at the same time looking for possibilities of territorial expansion.

Not only has France never felt such needs. She was even in a position to import foreign labor to a considerable extent. After the war as much as 10 percent of the French working people were foreigners (3,500,000, to be exact). That explains largely why no problem of unemployment has arisen in France until the most recent times. Almost 40 percent of the French people still are engaged in farming and the small landowner is preponderant in number everywhere. That is probably why the whole rhythm of the French economic system lacks that expansiveness and vitality which is typical for pioneering countries like America, England and Germany. The French are bent upon maintaining a steady level in their national structure, and they are inclined to look askance at any attempt from outside which could possibly disturb that inner balance which they have been able to strengthen so

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admirably in the past few years through a most conservative monetary policy.

With all this it is not difficult to understand the psychology of the Franco-German problem. And yet there ought to be a way out of the dismal maze of national prejudices. The peace of Europe requires their elimination. A constructive policy would tend to build a bridge across the borders for the mutual benefit of both nations. Naturally, the self-interest of each would be the primary incentive. That is why so far attempts at economic coöperation have shown to be most promising. Industrialists both in France and Germany have found it profitable to establish definite working agreements in the different fields of their specific activities. There are in existence now more than forty Franco-German industrial cartels, foremost among them those of the iron and steel, of the potash and of the dye groups. The Franco-German commercial treaty of 1927 opened the doors for an active interchange of goods, but as yet there has been little mutual enterprise.

France's supply of iron ore, for instance, is estimated at between 9,000,000,000 and 12,000,000,000 tons. On the other hand, Germany's requirements of that very commodity in the past year amounted to no less than 14,000,000 tons, but only 20 percent of that total was furnished by France. Then there is coal. Germany's deposits are valued at some 240,000,000,000 tons. In 1930 France imported 24,700,000 tons of coal, but only 21 percent of this amount came from Germany. If in addition we take into consideration Germany's importation of French textiles ($50,000,000 worth per annum in this category alone!), leather, fruit and vines, and France's importation of German machinery, pulp, sugar and woods, just to mention the goods on top of the trade balances, no further proof is needed to demonstrate the potentialities of the commercial intercourse between the two countries.

But the limits are not drawn by the normal flow of goods. Most of all, France needs the export of her capital surplus, while Germany is only too eager to put to work her surplus labor. If French capital and German labor could be made to coöperate, not only in the fields of their own national enterprises, but especially in the undeveloped territories of eastern and southeastern Europe, the chances for profitable arrangements would probably be many. As a matter of fact, thoughts of business leaders in both countries have recently concentrated on these very possibilities. A committee of industrialists and financiers has already been formed in France for the promotion of trade with Germany, and a similar group is now in process of formation on the German side.

All these are promising attempts at solving the Franco-German problem by establishing business contacts and thereby linking the interested groups through mutual profits. But the task is not accomplished if limited to economic issues. The divergencies in the political field must equally be taken care of in a broad vision of the common interest. There, too, many a stumbling block must be eliminated prior to the actual tackling of the individual problems. Distinction ought to be made between the issues urgently at hand, like reparations and disarmament, and those not requiring immediate attention, for instance, the Polish Corridor. And even then the approach will have to be effected by the most careful methods of diplomacy.

Success in the sense of an amicable and practicable adjustment of Franco-German relations can only be expected in the course of protracted negotiations. Too sanguine hopes ought not to be entertained, as the good-will required on both sides will at times be almost superhuman. The suggestion of a political armistice which would give time to both governments to create an atmosphere of conciliation has met with approval both in Berlin and Paris, although German public opinion was somewhat influenced by apprehensions lest the postponement of some essential petitions might prejudice the chances of the future. For the moment, at any rate, one must be satisfied with slow progress. But there is hope that the necessity of economic solidarity in face of the extraordinary emergency of the present day will increase the chances of eventual success.

It falls upon Catholics both in France and Germany to assume a full share of the responsibility for the promotion of a spirit of charity in the relations of their countries. That both want peace, no one can doubt. But a great deal of forbearance is required, a truly Christian heroism to overcome age-old prejudices and to bury jealousies and rivalries which can never be to the advantage, but only to the detriment, of national honor. The men at the heads of the two governments concerned, Pierre Laval and Heinrich Bruening, are fully conscious of the immensity of the task. They know that nothing can be gained by forcing the issues, nothing by relegating them into the abstract legality of an untenable past. Public opinion the world over ought now to give them full support. There could be no more wonderful and encouraging result of the many mistakes of the past, if Jules Cambon's pessimism were soon to be refuted forever by the establishment of a new era of friendship between these peoples.

Autumn, Paray-le-Monial

I can remember how in that old town
the yellow leaves of the plane tree fell in showers,
great yellow plane leaves drifting, drifting down,
all afternoon, into the dusky hours;
all afternoon, filling the mellow air,
no sound of voice, no hum of bee or bird;
only the plane leaves rustling, rustling. There
was no other sound but rustling to be heard.
There was no other sound—the silver fog in clouds
covered the meadows, crept up all the trees;
the road was lined with ghosts in silver shrouds—
no sight or sound, save when a little breeze
started the yellow plane leaves from the height,
rustling, rustling through the foggy night.

SISTER MARIS STELLA.

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GREED IS THE WITCH

By MICHAEL O'SHAUGHNESSY

One of the most encouraging aspects of the current depression is the readiness of American business men to examine the structure upon which recent social functioning has rested. In the following paper, Mr. O'Shaughnessy—who has been associated for years with fundamental productive enterprises—argues that "humanity's struggle today is that of all ages since the beginning of recorded history, the struggle to control avarice." He concludes that while improvement of a kind may be effected by international agreement, it is still more imperative to "arouse business men to a sense of their responsibility."—The Editors.

STATESMEN, economists and industrial leaders everywhere are groping in the dark for causes of, and remedies for, the world-wide business depression. The most commonly accepted "cause" is overproduction. But by its very nature, overproduction is an effect, not a cause. It is clear that before a remedy can be found for the present and recurring periods of business depression, the cause of overproduction must be definitely determined. And what is it? Avarice—which is defined by Webster as "excessive or inordinate desire of gain, covetousness"; which in turn is defined as "excessive desire for what belongs to another."

All wealth comes from the earth. The excessive desire for wealth results in a greater production of the products of the earth than the world can consume. As potential supply in the world, as now constituted, is greater than demand, a universal scramble for wealth ensues, through trade selfishness, unfair competition, etc., which results in social and industrial injustice.

The desire for gain in the individual is legitimate to the extent of all obtaining financial independence for themselves and for their families, in their station in life, but becomes avarice when huge fortunes are amassed by a comparative few at the expense of others. Notwithstanding the fact that the lot of the average citizen in the United States today is better than in any country in the world, and in any of all history, we are a nation of hundreds of millionaires and millions of citizens that cannot earn a decent living. Human labor is still considered a commodity, the market for which is controlled by money. As the world is now constituted, not only is it impossible for the masses of human beings to attain financial independence, but vast hordes everywhere are unable to make a decent living. In all countries, money has accumulated in the hands of so few that the buying power of the great mass of the population is not sufficient to consume the production of the overdeveloped capacity of industries producing the necessities of life. The result is that commodity prices are below the cost of production and both money and labor are unemployed.

On May 26, Under Secretary of the Treasury Mills made the statement that in the United States, in 1929, out of a total population of 120,000,000, there were only 2,500,000 individuals and about 250,000 corporations that paid an income tax; 380,000 paid 97 percent of the total amount received from individual taxes; 504,000 individuals had an income over $1,000,000.

In a compilation by the *Business Week*, it is shown that 92 banking organizations, comprising 3 percent of the banks in the United States, control 42 percent of the total banking resources, reported by the Controller of the Currency, June 30, 1930.

An article in the *American Economic Review* for March, 1931, estimates that 200 corporations control between 35 and 45 percent of the business wealth of the United States (excluding from business wealth "that of the government, agriculture and professions"). It also shows that these 200 corporations, with less than 2,000 directors, during recent years have shown a rate of growth, three times as fast as 300,000 smaller corporations, and that if this rate of growth is maintained, these 200 corporations, in twenty years, will own half the entire national wealth of the United States.

Money has ceased to be a medium for the exchange of commodities and services, and in its great accumulation in few hands, dominates all human activities. The situation has developed that the possessors of great wealth, as well as the masses who have nothing, are both the victims of the tyranny of money over human beings. Laws designed to protect the masses and to secure a better distribution of wealth and opportunity have been powerless to stop the gravitation of money toward the points of greatest accumulation.

The basis of our industrial structure is popularly supposed to be the reward of personal initiative. This right of freedom of action by the individual involves the corresponding duty to use it for the good of all. The fact that business in the United States in the last seventy-five years has fluctuated between some twenty odd peaks of prosperity and depths of depression, indicates that the comparatively few have not rendered to the masses service in the way of leadership, commensurate with their disproportionate reward of the right of personal initiative. Never before in the history of the United States has business, big and little, so generally acknowledged its inability to conduct its affairs honestly and fairly. This paradox of claiming personal initiative, while running to the government for laws to control personal conduct, is a phenomenon until recently unknown in this country. The application of private initiative in this machinery age of mass production and concentration of money in few hands, has resulted in a disproportionate distribution of the rewards and benefits. The concentration of money in comparatively few great corporations, controlled by an infinitesimal few, enormously rich individuals, and the extraordinary

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development of machine mass production has resulted in an alarming reduction in the demand for human labor and in the restriction of opportunity. A substantial number of citizens owning stock in these great corporations constitute a sort of middle-class, content to perpetuate control by the overlords and entirely indifferent to the welfare of the great mass of citizens.

Machines must serve and not destroy human beings. Labor displaced by machinery that cannot be absorbed in new industries created by it, will probably have to be provided with an opportunity to earn a living by shorter hours for all labor. The increased cost of manufactures resulting from such a solution will, by the nature of the problem, have to be borne by capital in a reduced earning-power of money, not, as represented, in inflated corporation capitalization, but on the actual amount of money employed in industry. In considering an equitable relation between wages for money and human labor, the basis must be actual money employed and not its fictitious earning-power. Passing on this increased cost to consumers would simply continue, and even aggravate, the present deadlock.

A redistribution of wealth will probably be attempted in the United States by increasing the income taxes in the higher brackets, on the theory that increased taxes, direct or indirect, on those that have little or nothing will not increase revenues and will further curtail the buying-power of the masses. Other means indicated by the trend of public opinion, are, by increasing inheritance taxes, and perhaps by abolishing tax-exempt securities. The resulting increased national revenues are likely to be distributed among the masses through old-age pensions, employment and health insurance, prosecution of public works on a grand scale, and other forms of state Socialism.

This is no new situation in the history of the world. The social injustice involved in it has been continuous. The fact is as stated before, that a better distribution of wealth exists today than at any time heretofore, and especially is this the case in the United States; but this very fact makes a solution of the problem more urgent. It also holds out the hope of a more orderly adjustment than in previous popular upheavals against social injustice, but the masses, particularly in the United States, have tasted some of the sweets of comfort and even luxury, the continued possession of which is threatened. They may be indifferent to their civic rights and duties, but not to their comforts and pleasures.

A concomitant of wealth accumulated in too few hands is excessive and widespread debt, which has always been the irritant that starts mass action for relief from social injustice. It is estimated that in the United States, debts, governmental, corporate and individual, amounted, in 1929, to about $153,000,000,000, which is over one-half of all the value of the property of the country, $350,000,000,000. Since 1929, property values have declined very substantially, while the liquidating figure of debts has increased in indirect ratio through the corresponding appreciation in the value of gold. It is entirely possible that interest and amortization charges on this debt represent an amount in excess of the possible profit in the production of the necessities of life, that can be purchased by the people with their buying-power restricted by the concentration of wealth in so few hands. The relation of debt to the distribution of wealth and purchasing-power of the masses is more unfavorable in all other countries of the world than in the United States.

Transportation of ideas by cable, telephone, automobile, airplane and radio has so vastly improved that it is difficult to suppress or color facts, and to obstruct the dissemination of ideas. Again, new political ideas, particularly in Russia and Italy, are being worked out on a grand scale. Russia, alone among the countries of the earth, has no unemployment problem. Rich and poor, high and low, everywhere are bewildered, apprehensive and discontented. All are conscious that things are not as they should be.

Humanity's problem today is that of all ages since the beginning of recorded history, the struggle to control avarice. After nineteen centuries of Christianity, the comparative few that possess wealth find it impossible to realize their true destiny of being trustees under God for the great masses of humanity that have nothing. It must be kept in mind that all the excessively rich are not avaricious, and that countless numbers of the moderately well-off and poor are infected with the poison. Hatred of the rich is but a form of idolatry of money. The more equitable distribution of wealth is a problem to be solved by the privileged few.

The desire for gain in corporations is legitimate to the extent of their providing steady employment for labor at fair wages, serving the public efficiently and paying their stockholders a fair return on the actual money invested in the business and not on capitalization based on fictitious earning-power. They are guilty of avarice when they underpay or underemploy labor, overcharge or cheat the public, take business from or destroy rivals by unfair competition, and when they accumulate wealth in excess of the legitimate requirements of their business, and for domination, social, industrial or political.

The desire for gain in nations is legitimate to the extent of each insuring equality of opportunity to all its citizens in their legitimate efforts to acquire wealth, but they are guilty of avarice when they attempt to enrich their own citizens at the expense of other peoples.

Largely as a result of the World War over 60 percent of the gold money held by all governments and their central banks has accumulated in the United States and France. In round figures, $5,000,000,000 in the United States and $2,500,000,000 in France, out of a total of about $11,250,000,000 for the world. Money gravitates internationally toward the points of greatest accumulation, and money so accumulated becomes frozen, so as to speak, in the hands of the countries possessing it. It seems impossible to stop the flow of gold toward the United States and France, or to

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effect a redistribution among other countries whose gold reserves have become impaired. This vicious circle is contracting so rapidly as to threaten to strangle the financial world: the gold hoarded in France and the United States ceases to be of practical use to the countries possessing it and becomes a menace to the financial existence of countries who vitally need it.

Not only does the United States possess nearly half of the liquid gold money capital of the world, but certain European nations owe the United States about $11,500,000,000, which, generally speaking, represents goods purchased by the Allies during the war, and destroyed in the conduct of that struggle. The interest and principal on this debt is payable in gold. The debtor nations, with a present insufficiency of gold to conduct their international trade, can only pay the interest and principal of their debt by a profit over the cost of production, of their exportable surpluses of goods, over and above their home requirements. Commodity prices are below the 1913 level, but corporation productive capacity and capitalization are about double that of the pre-war year. A difficult situation, this, to liquidate.

In such a situation, the United States built its tariff wall higher to prevent other nations from selling their exportable surpluses on this market. Most other nations have done likewise, so that international commerce throughout the world has become almost impossible, and payment of inter-governmental debts perhaps impossible.

Some correctives appear to be imminent. Inter-governmental debts are likely to be scaled down to a point where the debtors at least can pay the service charges on them without endangering their industrial existence. Some adjustment of international private debts may be necessary. Lower tariffs are likely to become recognized as indispensable to revive international commerce. The abandonment of the gold standard by Great Britain, likely to be followed by all nations except the United States and France, is but the acknowledgment of the fact that the gold hoard of these two countries threatens the industrial and financial life of the rest of the world. A conspicuous example, this, of international avarice overreaching itself. A reversion to a barter basis between nations in international commerce, exemplified in the wheat-coffee transaction between the United States and Brazil, is a step backward to primitive methods.

And it is to such a pass that avarice has brought mankind. The world is suffering from overproduction and underconsumption, and the cause of both is avarice. A staggering surplus of all the necessities of life exists throughout the world and countless hordes of human beings are on the verge of starvation.

Avarice cannot be controlled by law or any other artificial expedient. A tragic element in the chaos that has overtaken the financial and industrial world is that men have lost faith in their ability to curb their greed and to be fair to one another in the conduct of the world's business. In such a state of moral bankruptcy they seek laws to force them to do what they can only do for themselves. But the effectiveness of law depends upon the personal moral responsibility of the citizen to obey it. No force of government can compel its citizens, devoid of moral responsibility, who have lost faith in themselves and others, to obey its laws.

Avarice is a moral cancer that is eating away the vitals of mankind. Its ravages can be curbed only by human beings practising self-restraint and doing to others as they would be done by. This may, as many contend, involve a change in human nature, but it is easier to change human nature to the extent of making men fair and honest in business than it is to force them to be so by law. The one is at least possible. The other, utterly impossible. If we are to preserve civilization, mass machinery production and distribution and money must be opposed by a strenuous and universal effort to attain moral responsibility in the individual. Not philanthropy but clarity, not legality but justice. A moral awakening is the one thing most necessary.

If a fraction of the effort were expended in arousing business men to a sense of their moral responsibility that is spent in devising artificial compulsions to make them fair and honest in business, the present unsurmountable obstacle in most of the problems besetting the world would be removed.

Catholics, unlike other Christian brethren, have been blessed by Almighty God with a definite moral code, interpreted and enforced by an infallible authority, which applies with equal force to the social and business relations among men, as well as in spiritual matters. This blessing implies a corresponding duty that Catholic laymen, leaders in finance and industry, use their brains and resources to battle manfully against avarice to establish Christian principles in the conduct of the world's business. If a baker's dozen of outstanding Catholic industrial and financial leaders could be induced to organize and finance such a movement, they might easily be the lump that would leaven the whole mass and do the country a service of inestimable value. This would, of course, require money. Can any money be found to fight avarice and save the world?

Jack-Be-Nimble

Summer is a candle
In a golden stick,
A yellow, yellow candle
With a poppy wick.

A yellow, yellow candle
That burns a lovely while
Till autumn comes a-running
Down a purple mile.

Till autumn comes a-running
With a windy shout,
And vaults the golden candle-stick,
And blows the poppy out.

ETHEL ROMIG FULLER.

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THE MYSTICAL IN POETRY

By ALICE BROWN

EVEN readers who are deeply impressed by the poems of AE (George William Russell) are likely to add, out of a wistful candor: "I don't always understand them." I have heard that about "Vale," his last thin volume, and I hasten to answer that it would be a pity if we did understand them altogether: for who need understand the voice of the small wind that springs up in the morning, or the writing on the thin silver shield of the old moon, or other recurrent marvels of the day and night? For AE is a mystic, and if we could follow all his runes as he stands chanting them in our academic purlieus, we might become dangerously infected by strange rumors that are certainties to him. We might prematurely grow wings to fan away our darkness, and the sudden radiance would be too much for our unaccustomed sight. He sees form after form moving beautifully in this dim hall of vision which is our life, and sometimes even he may not know whether these are the giants or the gods. He has come to us from sacred hills and streams. He is an enchanter to whom enchantment is a simple matter anyone might learn. He shares his cup with us, and, giving us to drink of that heady brew, we are transported with the lure of it. He has seen the inferior gods, and he knows from their serene majesty and the indwelling light on them, of what a richness of being the One Who created them must be.

He believes in the possibility of happiness from within ourselves. We are to do the will of God; and what if the will of God is to cause us to exult and sing? God has larger and more gleaming ways to deal with the universe than merely to frown and say: "There's a pit I know. I'll cast you into it." I feel, through AE's ambassadorship, the morning, lilac time, every lasting hope. And what if we use up centuries on the way, can we do less than come to happiness and the feet of God? And God to say: "Don't stay there, My child. Come to My arms instead. How happy we both are at last! Was it partly through the universe, its variety and its beauty, that you saw My face? It is My face. Keep the vision of it, and you shall read a new message for you, day by day. The ages do not deny Me. Therefore do not you."

As for AE, though he has a certain practicality of reason, the eyes of the mind close before the eyes of the spirit, and he says: "The light seen behind or through a veil is always more suggestive than the unveiled light." And again: "We and all things swim in an ether of deity." From this spaciousness of vision he has tremendous generosities of judgment. He sees Prometheus and he sees Christ, and he knows that even a dark angel may wear on his forehead the sign of light. He does not forget that Aeschylus knew that Zeus, though inexorably just, was pitiful, and the Furies became the Merciful Ones. I like to think of this mystic of long residence among the shadows and half-shadows cast by things we do not clearly know, being persuaded into the arena of our poetic pastimes, not so much a troubadour as Thor, dropping in on the earth-born, going far toward drinking up the sea and lifting the old grey cat who is the Asgard Serpent, and always on the side of the gods against the giants: for though in the end the gods must, being gods, prevail, there is a sharp anguish of delight in helping on their victory.

The three-stanzaed introduction to "Vale" is tinged with the gentle sadness of twilight in a day too short, ending:

> Adieu sweet-memoried dust. I go
> After the Master for His dream.

He, indeed, this poet, sees himself as "a ghost who hears the cock crow and knows his hours are over," but in "Vale" there is nothing to substantiate it, no thinning of fancy, no creaking of the doors of life as he sets them open wider to invite beauty and wisdom to come in. Images cast their lovely shadows on the pages, as if the world were full of wings, and we find ourselves bound to the happy task of not reviewing "Vale" only, but regarding AE, as he appears in the sum of his books, and predicting the immense meaning he ought to have in a time of dearth like this. For we have repudiated the spirit. Beauty has largely gone from the earth, save for a few whispering leaves of books and the old patterns of crystals and flowers and liquescent cloud-shapes nature keeps on producing for her own designs and to give us alms from them. We have, in poetry as in prose, declined, to a great extent, upon mere formulae, and I am not sure that the earth, finding such lack of individual response in us, does not shrink within herself and refuse to speak. Perhaps she will tell us none of her secrets until we cease merely to catalogue and verify, but return to the old liturgy of wonder, to worship and adore.

And AE is an authentic guide. He knows that the true mystic is one who, wherever born, believes that, from the unrecorded past, "all rivers were sacred as the Ganges and all speech was holy," and that poetry, after music, is the most enchanting voice of earth. He shows us, if only by negation, what will happen to us if we abjure faith in Divine origins. He tells us there are "windows in the soul through which can be seen images created not by human but by the Divine imagination." But to accept that and ourselves to work on it is not all. We might, even in writing verse according to such formulae, strain after a working knowledge of this inter-relation of earthly and Divine, and do no more than pile metaphor on metaphor in a mere constructive mimicry. For true poetry is not a neat dovetailing of

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lines, a selection of striking images. It is vision, a reaching up and persuading something there in flight to come down to us. And this is AE again: "If a verse or even a line I think beautiful sounds in my brain, I know that by brooding upon it I can draw down the complete poem." If we would see as the true mystic sees, it must be through referring the appearances of things to their divine archetypes, remembering that there is not only the visible sky which is the nursery of wind and weather, but a gleaming firmament made to answer back the human soul.

To this man, the earth, when he calls deeply upon her, is transfigured, and she replies in whispers of her concealed intent. "It was," he says, "the hour when the King, an invisible presence, moved through His dominions, and nature knew and was hushed at the presence of her Lord." The stones are alive to him, and appearances so vivid, through the correspondences in his own open mind, that they seem life itself. These intelligences existing above us, the gigantic bright children of the One God, born to carry on His commerce between what we know as heaven and this planetary darkness—they must have strange periods of silent waiting when we repudiate the ancient wisdom and see merely what the electric light shows us as it falls on the products of our man-made tools. Then the spirit sinks back into its dwelling of cloud and waits for us to summon it again. There is something terrifying in the august abnegation of these gentle servitors of life. It is not too much to believe that they can be saddened—though not in fear, because they have lived too long to doubt the endlessness of things—when they delay our happiness by their own withdrawal. And we are not wilfully guilty in ignoring them.

It is inevitable that when change succeeds change in poetry, as in any creative art, we should respond with a child's loud outcry over new aptitudes, certain that we know more about all things, great and small, because we actually do know more about the form and movement of them. The wonder of looking at being from a new angle enchants us and we dwell on it absorbedly and push aside the old mystical aspects, lest they impede our vision. And we say: "Now I see things as they are." We forget that the earth is more than geology can tell us, even of its piled-up pyramids of years, and that love is not accounted for by psychic formulae and the necessities of birth, and in the confusion of that forgetfulness we have gone far from the fields where sacred founts are rising and must forever rise. Even poetry has been dominated by the machine, for with this age came in that standardization which is death to individual life. And the machine, being an inferior sort of god, is not to be disparaged; rather, "as a stranger give it welcome," to serve us, to buy us leisure from dull tasks. It is not in itself a denial of the past, but one of its species of fulfilment, and it, too, has its pathos if, in our haste to exploit its usefulness, we refuse to foster its individual beauties. But it must not be allowed to make over life itself in its own image. It must be subdued to the soul, as the soul is subdued to God. But it is a curious duty, in the clangor and febrile diversions of the present, this of saluting the machine which has gone far toward undoing us, as a manifestation of God's providence, and having its own dread beauty to contribute to His purposes. Still it can be done with a good grace, if at the same time we remember to guard the ancient shrines of inspiration from its uncouth encroachments.

When we challenge ourselves to look into the abyss of standardized values we are lucky if we find no machine-made poetry there with the rest. The high tide of free verse did a good deal toward an energetic manufacture of poetry, for, to the general mind, one page of it was as good as another if one could achieve a staccato style linked up with striking imagery. It is surprisingly easy to say something is like something else, and to say it with an eccentricity to catch the eye. And as to the inception of poetry, I believe that when we see a thing of beauty and say to ourselves, "That would make a poem," we are doing violence to the delicate spirit of it all. For getting up subjects for verse belongs to standardizing and nothing else. A poem should be a freak of heavenly luck. It should come singing and dancing into the brain like a troubadour lilting into town. You hear him a long way off, and suddenly he's there. Don't think you can telephone him: "Come in on such a day. I'll send the car for you." He won't come. If he did, he'd only laugh.

Poetry is a divine unreason, a heavenly unrest, The mind that conceived it is the great unpredictable adventurer of the universe. It cannot work by formulae. Art is more personal than that. The poet must be allowed to look at life through all the atmospheric veils he wants, as the painter looks at the landscape before him, and always through the illusion wrought by his own eyes. And if he is divinely justified in painting at all, his picture will be different from that of any other man. In this matter of illusion in poetry, there are the

> . . . magic casements opening on the foam
> Of perilous seas in faery lands forlorn.

What a spell it laid on Leigh Hunt, himself of a "most excellent fancy"! He says:

> You do not know what the house is, or where. . . . But you see the window, open on the perilous sea, and hear the voice from out the trees in which it is nested, sending its warble over the foam. The whole is at once vague and particular, full of mysterious life. You see nobody, though something is heard; and you know not what of beauty or wickedness is to come over that sea.

It is not inevitable for the mystical in poetry to be the obscure. But it demands perception in the reader, a mind attuned to those faint echoes it evokes of something not of earth. And that sensitiveness can hardly be a thing learned and practised—though AE, the mystic, does say that the habit of seeing visions may be induced by inviting them! Rather should it come

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from the rapport established through a love of things spiritual.

If one were arguing the validity of such poetry, one would expect dissenting voices to begin reciting immemorial lines of English verse which are clear as unsullied streams:

> Hark! hark! the lark. . .
>
> I could not love thee, dear, so much
> Loved I not honor more. . .
>
> Dust hath closed Helen's eyes. . .

and scores of the imperishable beauties of a more "spacious" time. But these, with their vaster vision, are bent in an arc of the whole sweeping firmament of human life and reflect it in little. They conform to the greater demands of the soul. Certain poems of a conventional form are little more than metrical statements, yet, in their large implications, they, too, are of the heavens.

> Beautiful Evelyn Hope is dead!

This, if you elide the adjective, is no more than the casual remark of a man to another he meets in the street: yet with the adjective it is immortal love and inconsolable grief. And to return again to AE, to whom it is all quite simple, this interplay between heaven and earth, the voice of which is poetry: our business, he seems to know, is to live on a level where the voices may be heard.

> If we descend to the depths, the spiritual powers desert us, as, in the Chaldean myth of the descent of Ishtar, the goddess, at every gate, was bereft of some symbol, and scepter or diadem or robe or girdle or sandals were taken from her until at last she entered the Underworld naked and shorn of divinity. That was a myth of the soul. To us, too, as we rise from the depths, the spiritual powers return, as to Ishtar at the gate of every sphere was restored some of her regalia until, entering through the everlasting gate, she was once more crowned and Queen of Heaven.

THE CRUSADE AGAINST THE BABY

By HARYOT HOLT DEY

THE SUBTLE propaganda against the baby flows in through various channels. Taken up from its various sources it has become a movement that disseminates a prejudice against him which tradition is powerless to meet, and it is only that the baby is endowed with a certain quality of salesmanship of his own that he stands up against the situation as it exists.

There was a time when a religious rite posed as a reason for tossing girl babies to the crocodiles in the Ganges. There was Herod who, fearing for his power, decreed that all boy babies around two years of age should be slain. But now that the scientists have taken the baby up as a subject for study, there has developed a certain attitude that should give sane and normal people pause. If the baby is not debunked, he is analyzed, psychiatrized, scientized and otherwise revealed as such an enormous problem that only the brave can afford to battle with him.

Dr. John Watson in his book, "Psychology from the Standpoint of a Behaviorist," explains about the libidos and the Oedipus complex of the baby, taking into account the significance of tests from the age of four hours, making us realize that we have been missing the importance of many things about babies up till now. Thorndike says he has noticed "a stronger tendency among educated women to break away from the sentimental drivel connected with the rearing of a child, and to make a scientific problem of it."

The Eugenic Congress that met in Europe last spring prophesied that in a few years there would have to be a permit to have a baby, because of the exigencies of a surplus population—more than the earth could provide for. The *Birth Control Review,* as the organ of the birth control movement, is certainly not in favor of the baby, although the slogan, "The Right of the Child to Be Wanted," has an enticing, logical and friendly significance.

Gynecologists now charge $1,000 to usher the baby into atmospheric existence, thereby often classifying him with radio and the automobile and the electric devices of the home usually paid for on the instalment plan. The physicians have made so many iron-bound rules regarding scientific diet and care of the baby that well-meaning and conscientious mothers are petrified with fear if a rule is broken, charging themselves with incompetency, so that what was once a joy and a delight has become a serious responsibility.

An accouchement once cost $25.00. And women used to play dolls with their babies. But no more. No more peek-a-boo; no more "Banbury Cross"; no more "Trot to Boston"; no more baby talk; no more "Mother Goose"; no more rocking; no more lullabies; no more anything with joy in it. No more Bella Wilfers as immortalized by Dickens; no more Johnny Tetterbys whose baby cut its teeth on the fingers of the family.

Conditions are different now; we take ourselves more seriously. But it's all a part of the crusade against the baby. I do not hold that the baby is not a monopolist, keeping the family at home from the movies and other inviting places, breaking up the habits of the home, changing the schedule so that you wouldn't recognize it for the same, draping his belongings around on the furniture. All this is not the half that he does. They are merely points to prove that he is a real person.

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Then there is the landlord who has never wanted him, who prefers childless tenants, and the janitor who chases him away, and the parks where the baby is not allowed to go on the grass. The landlord with his prejudices is not new. We had him long before the scientists came in, with their Oedipus complexes and their libidos, with their laboratory tests beginning at four hours after birth. The landlord is a tradition, too old to talk about or to notice. The landlord is a perennial enemy. But he is part of the crusade against the baby. A charter member.

The real theme of this story about the baby is not negative in its spirit. It is a plea for the little old-fashioned baby—the live-and-let-live kind of a baby—and also a hint at some of the misunderstandings that are the cause of the trials attendant on the presence of a baby in the house. A great many old-fashioned babies have lived, as witness the crowd at the ball game, or the thousands—well, anywhere. The crowd on lower Broadway at the lunch hour will do as an illustration that a few have weathered the gale of infancy.

Theory and practice do not always coördinate, especially in commonplace affairs wherein theorists are worsted by confronting unclassified situations. For example: The professor's wife was expecting a eugenic baby, and we were all thrilled at the opportunity to see something different. The professor's wife had never had a baby before, but she had studied and written and lectured about babies, and she know all there was to be known. Besides that, the professor himself had specialized on the same subject, so why shouldn't they have a eugenic baby?

Soon after the new arrival I carried flowers to the mother and I was expectant. I could see that the mother had been crying. The baby was lying on her lap and was crying too. With a sob in her voice and a quivering chin she admitted to me that she had no idea what could be the matter with him. She had consulted all the books that she and the professor had written, and even gone over a few of the lectures, but nowhere was there any light thrown on the subject. He was just one unhappy little baby with some kind of complex, and even his defense movements did not classify with the chart from the laboratory. It was no use. What was she to do?

There was a rap on the door and the janitress of the building entered, a fine, sensible, motherly person of German extraction. She said she had heard the baby cry, and thought she might be of assistance.

"Here! Give him to me!" she said. And the mother surrendered him without apparent regret. In a second the janitress had whipped off her red flannel petticoat, wrapped it snugly around the baby and settled herself in a rocking-chair. It was worth while to feel the vibrations lift in that problem-ridden room. The mother breathed a sigh of relief, the baby snug and cozy in the red flannel petticoat, the warm arms and the soft pillow of the janitress's bosom to which he was firmly clasped, ceased his wailing and slept.

"The little dear!" crooned the janitress, adding a few words in a language that no one but the baby could understand. There could be no doubt but what the flannel petticoat was fairly alive with germs and microbes, but it turned the trick, the mother dried her eyes, and with all the rules broken, the traditions taking their places, she even smiled.

The baby slept so long that when the professor came home he sent for the doctor, who said it was all right to let the baby sleep. The professor made mental note of the importance of heat in dealing with young children, and resolved to incorporate it in his next book, regarding it as a new idea. The janitress's baby talk, the petticoat, the singing and the rocking were not mentioned to the professor, all of which proves that women do stand together in emergencies.

The doctor regulates the baby's diet, and worked out according to his instructions, it requires four people to feed a two-year-old a soft-boiled egg. One person holds the watch; one holds the cup; one opens the egg, and one dashes upstairs with it to feed it to the baby before it gets cold. It is the doctor's orders.

"I am not to blame for that nonsense," declared the doctor in self-defense. "Those women who do that are morons. They go literal on me. If I say to keep track of the baby's weight, they weigh the baby half a dozen times a day. They weigh him before he eats and after he eats; before he sleeps and when he wakes up. If I tell them to let the baby sleep in the fresh air, they leave him on the fire-escape even in a snow-storm, and the neighbors call up the Gerry Society."

The doctor laughed as he declared an alibi. But it is due to the doctor's influence that the mothers are petrified at germs. The doctor says that a baby must never be kissed. Ah, well, as they like! But it's too bad! Where love is, life is, and it must be expressed, or it is not. The negative sentiment lines up with the anti-baby crusade.

The other day a young couple boarded a cross-town bus through Central Park. A pair of boy and girl parents with their new baby. The young father carried the baby all wrapped up in a pink eiderdown blanket. The mother seemed a bit wide-eyed and wan, and the young father was conscious of his responsibilities. It was the first time the baby had been out of the house. Everybody in the bus was keen about them. We all listened in.

Now and then the father peeped in at the baby and exchanged glances with the mother. Then the mother peeped and exchanged glances with the father. They were not apprehensive about the future or the scientific theories. They were taking their chances and living, and we had a front seat at life. We found they were going to grandma's. Up Central Park West they went, and we all craned our necks as they disappeared up the avenue—a holy family—and the bus rumbled on.

Why, love would die out in the world but for the baby. The anti-baby crusade is a serious matter.

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PIERRE LAVAL

By LOUIS P. HARL

M. PIERRE LAVAL'S name was scarcely known outside of parliamentary circles in France a year ago—quite unknown outside of the country's borders. Today he is one of the leading figures on the stage of world affairs. It would not be exactly correct to call him one of the world's strong men. I suspect he would not particularly care for the title. His strength, like that of his nation, is no less real for the fact that it is not the kind of which men speak boastingly. It is, however, one of the surest kinds, being a combination of intelligence and suppleness.

Even today, although M. Laval has become one of the most esteemed men of France both within and without political circles, the public knows little about him. It is, I believe, somewhat characteristic of the man's personality that he has never courted public popularity. His rather human simplicity, however, would make nothing farther from his thoughts than to pose as a "mystery man," as one or two American sketches of him would lead one to believe. But certain facts about the Premier's career and many sides of his character remain unknown. Although I have followed French politics pretty closely in recent years and have had a particular interest in M. Laval's career, since he became one of France's leading figures, I cannot speak with any assurance on two points: his age, or his religious views. Perhaps neither is of the greatest public importance.

He was born about fifty years ago in the village of Chateldon, department of Puy-de-Dôme, of peasant parents, fairly well-to-do for that relatively poor region. His father's house, it is said, was of the patriarchal type still somewhat common in Auvergne and other parts of southern and central France. But the family fortune did not permit this son, whose youthful talents do not seem to have been particularly precocious, to pursue his studies very far. It is said that he made his acquaintance with the classics while driving a wagon. The village curé, while being taken to the station one day, was surprised to see his driver reading a Latin epitome of the Scriptures. Years later the same curé in the "Parish Bulletin" pointed Laval out as an example of how will-power could enable a little teamster to overcome the hardest obstacles.

The young Auvergnat continued his studies through his personal efforts, and eventually became a tutor at Bayonne, then at Dijon and afterwards at Lyons, where, in the same lycée, another famous French politician, M. Edouard Herriot, had already acquired a brilliant reputation as an intellectual. It seems, however, that there was nothing more than a passing acquaintance between the brilliant young professor and the humble tutor. Despite all obstacles, Laval finally won his bachelor's degrees in law and science, and appeared upon that stage which is the goal of most ambitious young Frenchmen—Paris.

His practice at the Paris bar at first was confined mostly to minor labor cases, and he usually appeared as the able but not brilliant advocate of workers' rights. Sometime afterward he was elected mayor of Aubervilliers, a workers' suburb of Paris, and on the eve of the war, Socialist deputy by Aubervilliers. It is interesting to note that although M. Laval shortly after the war broke with the Socialists, who are now among his political enemies, he remained faithful to Aubervilliers and Aubervilliers to him. He is still mayor of this radical and sometimes turbulent community, and recently when a factory explosion there killed two or three workers, the Premier and Minister of the Interior hurried to the spot to show his sympathy. After his separation from the Socialists, and one or two political reverses at the hands of his constituents, in 1927 he was elected senator for the Seine department by an overwhelming majority, including most of the moderate votes.

M. Laval had served in the Cabinet several times, mostly for short intervals, as Minister of Public Works and Minister of Labor, before he was called upon last January to form a Cabinet as Premier. He also retained the portfolio of Minister of the Interior, perhaps the greatest lever of power in French politics.

Until he became Premier M. Laval could hardly have been called even a national figure. During the war he accepted parliamentary immunity from military service, and attracted practically no attention outside of narrow parliamentary circles. During his previous short terms in the Cabinet, although he took the leadership in championing the much-discussed social-assurance law, and settled several ticklish labor disputes very capably, he still drew little popular attention, although his power in political circles was steadily increasing.

It has been said by one not in his present political camp, that M. Laval has had the privilege "d'avoir traversé plus de milieux que la France ne compte de provinces." But the statement does not render full justice to the man's abilities and qualities of character, to which he has remained remarkably faithful. Of humble origin himself he has always been devoted to the cause of the people. As a Socialist he was attached to the Right wing of the party, and when the party split in 1920 he seized the occasion to leave it altogether, and has since sat as an independent and played a solitary hand in politics.

This is not the place to enter into the intracacies of French internal politics, but if the opinion of a very conservative foreign observer can be accepted, M. Laval must be given the credit of having achieved a remarkable mastery of political art—a mastery which has enabled him to have friends and win support from a dozen parties—without sacrificing any essential qualities or principles. At the present time he heads a government which derives its support from the Center and the Right and which is fiercely attacked by his former colleagues. He has undeniably supplanted M. Tardieu as the strong man of the Cabinet, yet M. Tardieu remains one of his best friends.

Conservative French political leaders looked askance at M. Laval's sudden rise to leadership, and when he was called upon last January to head the government in a most crucial period of the country's history, they recalled with misgivings his former political associations. But he has guided the helm so adroitly that even the most iron-clad nationalists have had nothing but praise for him. At the same time the Socialists and the Socialist-radicals, although now in the opposition, remain personally friendly to the Premier, whose courage, honesty and ability they secretly admire. One of the most interesting chapters of M. Laval's career as Premier has been his relations with M. Briand, but to do justice to this subject would require an entire article. Perhaps no man in French politics today could have handled the delicate foreign affairs situation that confronted M. Laval during the six or eight months after he took office so skilfully as he has handled it. At the head of a majority which, at least secretly, was hostile to the Foreign Minister whose presidential aspirations it defeated, M. Laval not only succeeded in keeping in hand M. Briand's foes, but also succeeded in retaining his apparent friendship and, more important still, in utilizing his great prestige while at the same time imposing his own will. It is significant that he should visit the United States alone.

In appearance, M. Laval can hardly be called French at all. Certainly he is not the typical Auvergnat type, although he has never entirely lost the Auvergnat accent. Coal black, unruly

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hair and keen dark eyes, thick lips and an arched nose, hint perhaps of a Moorish strain. But few French statesmen have better illustrated the national characteristics of keen although often intuitive intelligence, suppleness, patriotism, will-power, courage, modesty and simplicity. It is said that he prefers, and excells in, tête-à-tête politics and diplomacy, and his visit to Mr. Hoover has been watched with the keenest interest by more than the two nations directly involved.

TWO CHURCHES WITH CARVINGS

By ANNE RYAN

Whippany

THE ROAD is out of Chester to the east; iron hills are passed with foundries now silent and rusty and smokestacks red and dull against the perfectly white sky of evening. In colonial days, the days of its greatest activity, it was here that men scooped ore off the top merely, and were so greedy to sell that the iron was dragged by donkey teams—because they had no wagons strong enough—along roads to the seaport of Newark; and they were great bars of grade high enough to be shipped to England in 1791! All this activity is forgotten now; the town is asleep and it is for its church that Whippany is visited.

The greatest sound through the ancient village is the Rockaway; with the breathless importance of all little rivers it preaches, talks and converses of mountains whence it comes and of cities which it will define and bound.

To take the long road around, the crescent roads which lead again and again into lanes, is a pilgrimage. At last there it stands, a spire, plain wooden walls, and tiny as a picture. Inside it is all treasure. The door is open, one step up into the vestibule hollow and wooden, with its two red Gothic chairs beneath two blue miniature windows. The original church has been embellished. The primary colors are accented. The effect is pure painting. Against the light walls the arches of the windows are outlined with a band of thistle-blue five inches wide giving a certain purity and serenity as though each were open to an arc of summer sky. There is no stained glass; the frosted panes are tipped on branches and the dying year. Inside the altar rail is a mass of color. Even the floor of the sanctuary has been given its coat of great squares, black and white—a bizarre simplicity. Four slim, square pillars reach up to make arches before the altar. They are completely covered with patterns in sharp blue, red, and green—all colors of the same vivid grade. Three lamps burn within the arches like hollow and luminous apples encased in silver and upheld by chains. Above these a prayer is spelled out, a prayer for country people; the letters glisten. There is something homely in this, earthy and simple. The open windows let in the friendly air of evening and the silence of all valley churches embedded in green.

On the wall at each end of the altar-rail is a small statue without a niche or canopy of any kind. These statues—magenta in color and of the richness of ripe fruit—are on a level which invites, and can be examined closely. The full significance is not evident at once, but on detail they are seen to be authentic, worth a dusty journey, worth an hour's absence from the river and the valley. Centuries have passed over these mediaeval pieces; they are the fine links which bind more firmly than a record.

One is of the mother of the Virgin, teaching her—a seated figure no more than fifteen inches high. The treatment of the robe, veil and uplifted hand is of the greatest tenderness; carved are the tiny fingers holding the book, carved the young grace of the maiden and the sorrowful, deep brooding of the saint; there is no look at all in her face for the child but reverie and a listening. It becomes in an instant a place to kneel, a place of understanding and compassion.

The other is the Pieta. The same reddened and mellow wood, the same miniature abundance. It is the very actual and human expression which distinguishes; all sorrow is here, as in the opposite group all compassion and serenity are present; and the miracle is this, that with a piece of wood and a few tools an unknown achieved a divine grief, a divine despair. The heart is stilled, the sorrows of the world are engulfed in the Pieta's many-sworded heart.

These are but two spots in the crowded, almost gaudy colors of the sanctuary; the mosaic of tapestry behind the altar, the three Gothic chairs, the painted arches contrast with the creamy, country silence of the walls outside the rail. At the door there is a large, brilliant fresco, primitive and with a nimbus, exactly like a figure of the catacombs. The influence is Byzantine clearly; and out of that, Slavic, and peasant colors.

Outside the sun sinks behind the specter trees; autumn, pale with the colors of winter, is dragging over the fields.

South Orange

NEW, EXPENSIVE and fashionable, yet worth coming to see for the mere fact that it contains the latest example of modern Gothic carving.

At intervals wood-carving again decorates like a permanent black lace, but stylized, remote, as though the essential wish of the artist was to make a pattern, graceful, fitting and distant. There is nothing here to touch the heart—no Pieta, no serene and breathing saint. The altar is unusual: a rich table of marble without a back and with a suspended crucifix, all surrounded by four pink marble pillars upholding a massive canopy. But the side altars have their usual wall elevation rising against the stone like winter trees. They are entirely carved, the center figure is stylized; everything is symmetrical, but so delicate that the odor of sandalwood is expected. The uncanopied pulpit is a forest of little figures and tiny enameled backgrounds of new gold which glows. From a distance this pulpit is well related and stands out like a jewel placed carefully on a cushion; it is said to have cost a fabulous sum—an awe which takes the place of tenderness. The figures are done with the slight grotesqueness of Gothic illuminations, without individuality and with contorted expressions. But it is well worth a study.

The carving of the altar-rail gives the impression of branches flattened, an espalier from which the white steps of the altar flow upward behind it. Outside the rail, linking the confessionals, the transept has two identical altars completely of wood with a single dark, unpainted figure against a niche of cut velvet. Above the deep somberness of this wall of carving rise the transept windows. In this church the finest glass is to be seen: prismatic; light is shattered, glistens and quivers. It can be compared to the best in Angers, Poitiers or Rouen. One turns from window to window and they are "like rushing bouquets of new flames in the chimneys, like fresh flowers."

What is valuable about this church is this: its relation to our own day and the unusualness of our being here when it is exactly new—for it is a monument. Added and added light of innumerable suns will pass over the stone, centuries will stand outside, the windows will dim a little, perhaps some of the carving will crack off on the cornices, then people will say, "It is three hundred years old." They will point out its beauties again and again, the same pulpit, the same dark saints covered with shadows; but it will have added to itself something which it has not now, a treasure, a veil; and people will say, when they make journeys to look at it, "This is the craft and architecture of the twentieth century." So we shall be living still.

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THE PLAY

By RICHARD DANA SKINNER

Balieff's Chauve-Souris

NIKITA BALIEFF is with us again! From every point of view this is an important fact of the theatrical season, for Balieff catches up the essence of the theatre as few other men living today. He is both clown and circus manager, and in each capacity he is an artist.

When Balieff first brought his "Bat" theatre to New York some seasons back, a justified roar of delight arose from audiences and critics alike. Whether this suave and rotund master of ceremonies brought before you a delicate ballet or a rough and tumble Russian caricature or an artificial bit of nonsense such as the ballet of the wooden soldiers, the spirit was always fresh, the action sharp and the theatrical quality marked by superb exaggeration and rhythm. Later editions of the "Chauve-Souris" were not quite as successful. This year's program, however, is a complete departure from earlier ones. Instead of a dozen or more sketches, tableaux and ballets, we now have one long ballet, an episodic story in twelve scenes, done in English, and a short operetta in French. That which was Russian to the core has given place to that which is international and of the world theatre. No longer do we have the monstrous absurdities of Katinka, nor aristocratic picnics along the Volga. What we have in its place is excellent, better perhaps than anything of a similar character attempted by our own showmen, but it is distinctly not Russian, except in the character of the mind that conceived it. And that brings us back to the only important point, that whatever Balieff does has a distinct personal quality attached to a deeper quality of sheer and universal theatre.

The first part of the current program is entitled "A Romantic Adventure of an Italian Ballerina and a Marquis." I cannot say much for the story, which concerns itself chiefly with the amorous misdoings of a ballerina and a marquis who are held up by brigands on one of their secret journeys. It is simply a contrived mechanism to give opportunities for some enchanting music and dances—the music being taken from Mozart's "Petits Riens." The important dance numbers are entrusted to Mlle. Ryaboushinskaya and to Boris Romanoff, the former in traditional ballet steps and the latter in the characterized stiffness of an old man. Through color and rhythm and bold artificiality, the whole affair catches a certain antique charm, but as good things and better have been done by our own master showmen.

The number which particularly reveals the Balieff touch is that composing the second part of the program, based on a story by Alexander Pushkin. It is called "The Queen of Spades," and tells with high dramatic suspense and supreme irony the story of why Hermann, a lieutenant in the Engineer Corps, went mad. First we have a prologue, in which the madman is muttering "three of hearts—seven of diamonds—ace of clubs," only to add with a shriek of horror, "the queen of spades!" Then we are transported to Versailles, about 1775, when the young countess, dubbed, because of her spitefulness, "the Queen of Spades" and stupendously in debt at the gambling table of the Duke of Orleans, accepts the magical aid of Count Cagliostro and, at his direction, plays three winning cards, the three of hearts, the seven of diamonds and the ace of clubs. This cancels her entire debt and wins her a huge fortune. But before she plays, she takes an oath never to reveal the secret formula, and never to touch a card again. Then we find ourselves in St. Petersburg again, at another gaming table, which Hermann, the lieutenant, watches with fascinated eyes. But he is no gambler. His fear of losing is greater than his cupidity. It is not until he hears that a certain old countess, years before, used a formula given her by the devil (so it is said) that his greed is aroused. He makes love to the countess's young ward in the hope of wheedling the secret from the old countess before her death. At last he enters the old woman's chambers at night and tries to extort the magic formula. When she refuses, he threatens. The fright brings on her death. Hermann is desperate, and thinks himself a murderer. He goes to the mortuary chapel and peers into the dead countess's face, only to see her eyes leering at him. But later, as her funeral procession passes his rooms, he hears from her ghostly lips the winning formula. He rushes feverishly to the officers' gambling tables and plays all he has in one stake. The three of hearts wins, then the seven of diamonds on redoubled stakes, and then, in his greedy haste, he draws from the pack, not the magic ace of clubs, as intended, but the queen of spades—the card that symbolized the old countess herself! Her name and her spirit become her revenge. Hermann goes mad.

This is obviously one of those tightly artificial little tales in which the literature of Continental Europe abounds, a tale such as Balzac might have written. But its very artificiality yields to the persuasive magic of the theatre to make an engrossing dramatic sequence. Balieff adds to its bold theatricality by a dozen masterly strokes in direction, scenic design and costuming. The English-speaking actors he has chosen for this sequence have caught some of the grim directness of the Russian school, particularly George Hayes who takes the part of the mad lieutenant and carries through its scenes in a rising climax of torture. Marie Ault, as the old countess, also does an amazingly strong character portrait. Perhaps this part of the program can hardly be called light entertainment for shattered nerves, but it has the quality of engrossing interest and of withdrawing one utterly from a world of realities into a sphere of intense make-believe. And that is one of the life purposes of the universal theatre.

The third part of the program is by all odds the least interesting, except for the novelty of seeing Balieff himself in an acting part. Many of us had probably forgotten that Balieff's career on the stage began as an acting member of the Moscow Art Theatre. His superlative distinction as a master of ceremonies in immaculate evening dress had completely overshadowed his possible abilities as an actor. Now, in the rather silly operetta with which he closes his present program, we have the chance to see him as the real comedian, vigorous with a perfect sense of timing and wholly in touch with his audience at every instant, after the fashion of all good clowns. As the foolish old general who is having some trouble in marrying off his niece, he manages to keep the audience in complete and uncritical good humor while the other members of his company go through their paces.

To many, this change in the general character of the "Chauve-Souris" entertainment will probably be quite unsatisfactory. Certainly the first and last numbers contribute little except as an exhibit of style in production. But the middle number is something quite unique for our stage, and certainly the Balieff method of investing everything with rich theatrical quality should prove an amusing study in contrast to the clumsy methods of some of our moronic showmen with their impossible "Vanities" and "Scandals." (At the Ambassador Theatre.)

The Sex Fable

GILBERT MILLER was the producer who first brought an Edouard Bourdet play to the American stage. That first play was "The Captive," which dealt restrainedly but unwisely with neurotic abnormalities. Now we have "The Sex

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Fable"—a poor translation of the original French title of "The Weaker Sex."

In this play Bourdet deals intimately and ironically with a large group of expatriate characters in Paris, not one of whom has a decent or worth-while thought, or, for that matter, any thought beyond trafficking, in some fashion, in sex. Madame Leroy-Gomez, the mother of a large brood of Argentinians, is solely concerned in marrying her sons (or in keeping them married) to rich women, and her daughters and prospective daughters-in-law are solely concerned either in their own secret love affairs or in staving off escapades of their husbands. The other chief character is the head waiter in the Paris hotel, who serves as diplomat-in-chief in reconciling mixed situations or in procuring young lovers for rich old ladies or rich old ladies for the benefit of impoverished young men. As a slight climax to this generally reeking atmosphere, the theme of abnormality is again trotted forth to extract a loud laugh.

From these two plays we can better appraise Bourdet's turn of mind. We can see that his thoughts run by choice in a murky channel—not that he approves of the things he writes about, but in the sense that this seems to be the only kind of material which he finds interesting. Those who felt that "The Captive" was an unjustified excursion into a psychopathic clinic may now feel reasonably sure that their judgment was right.

It is only fair to add that Bourdet thoroughly castigates the characters in this new play. He is both ironic and satirical, but he drifts away from this mood so often and into a mood of cheaply sophisticated comedy that most of the point is lost. He simply wallows in the murk and the mud, lifting his head occasionally to emit a loud laugh or a scornful sneer. Even the rich pleasure of seeing Mrs. Patrick Campbell's technique, or the suave niceties of Ronald Squire, or the incisive directness of Helen Haye or the gracious charm of Helena D'Algy cannot compensate for the fetid atmosphere in which this play is soaked. (At Henry Miller's Theatre.)

A Bruckner Mass

THE SOCIETY OF THE FRIENDS OF MUSIC opened the current season, on October 25, with the first recorded concert performance in America of Bruckner's Mass in F Minor. The work, the strength of which lies in its liturgical rightness, is built round a Credo in every sense both charming and extraordinary. The profession of faith is phrased in a light-hearted, almost naive, recitatif, out of which the music moves to emotional climaxes of well-nigh ecstatic pathos and hope. Very likely the tenor of this music is still romantic, but it is a romanticism so completely subordinated to Catholic mystical objectivity that work of a new order is manifestly achieved. By comparison the other parts of the Mass seem a little weak and relatively unfinished. The Benedictus, for instance, is charming but it does not rival the magnificent handling of the same theme in Beethoven's Missa Solemnis. As a whole, this Bruckner composition is of the first order of "Catholic" music, and to my mind its suitableness for the concert program has been demonstrated. The choral instrument which the Friends of Music have developed and perfected is easily among the very finest in the United States. Though possibly better adapted for clarity and firmness of expression than for subtle modulation, it is a well-handled and intelligent organization. On this occasion the soloists—Madames Fleischer and Telva, Messrs. Schorr and Jagel—had comparatively little opportunity to sing. Yet it was evident again that Mr. Schorr is one of the really great baritones of our time.

G. N. S.

COMMUNICATIONS

CATHOLICS AND PROHIBITION

Indianapolis, Ind.

TO the Editor: There have been communications in THE COMMONWEAL from my friends in St. Louis, Dr. McCarthy, a Methodist minister, and Father Wilbur, a former Episcopalian, both of whom mentioned my name in their discussion of Catholics and prohibition.

From Dr. McCarthy's letter one might infer that we Catholic prohibitionists are "all dressed up and no place to go," while it is evidently Father Wilbur's thought that we are to be pitied in our loneliness, when he attempts to explain why there are not more Catholic prohibitionists.

While we have lost by death during the past year Fathers O'Callaghan and Zurcher, Dr. John G. Coyle and Denis McCarthy, nationally known as Catholic leaders, we still have with us Monsignor Foley, Fathers Reiner and Ross, Dr. John Lapp and Kathleen Norris, and we have other members equally prominent in their various communities.

When we consider the names of the organizers, which included the following: D. F. Connolly, Tulsa, Oklahoma; Patrick Cudahy, Cudahy, Wisconsin; Reverend John J. Curran, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania; Judge W. H. DeLacy, Washington, D. C.; Humphrey Desmond, Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Edward H. Doyle, Detroit, Michigan; Edward Hines, Chicago, Illinois; Judge Jerry B. Sullivan, Des Moines, Iowa; and Frank P. Walsh, Kansas City, Missouri—I feel justified in saying there never was a Catholic movement of any kind that appealed to so many Catholic leaders.

The mere mention of these names ought to make thinking people conclude that there is some good in prohibition, which I will admit is still an experiment "far nobler than the other great experiment which began at Concord and ended at Yorktown," as Father Foley said when appearing before the Congressional Committee last year defending the Eighteenth Amendment. I firmly believe in prohibition as being the only solution of the liquor problem, in the way of benefiting posterity and insuring the destinies of our country, by destroying liquor, root, branch and all.

It is my recollection that Dr. McCarthy's article was not at all a discussion of the merits of prohibition, but directed toward the attitude of Catholics on the prohibition movement, which in the future will affect the credit of the Mother Church, with which I concur, and which I believe was the thought of your editor when including in his comment the following: "That American Catholic opinion, essentially urban, has allowed its disapproval of prohibition to go too far and to become virtual indifference to, if not actual abetting of, unlawful traffic in liquor, is not our opinion merely but that of several—perhaps many—leading churchmen."

I certainly do not subscribe to what Father Wilbur has to say as to what governments can do and what they cannot do, and as we had prohibition for over seventy-five years and had it in 75 percent of our territory, before the adoption of the Eighteenth Amendment, it is a rather late day to discuss its legality and especially after the Supreme Court, through our co-religionist, Chief Justice White, has expressed its opinion on that subject. To satisfy Dr. McCarthy that we do not get our opinions from the priests, let me say that I think Father Wilbur is "talking through his hat," and using bad taste in doing so, having in mind the manner in which our own Denis McCarthy's statements last summer in the *Christian Century* on a controversial subject were met by Protestant contributors.

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It is most unfortunate that many people writing on this subject are not aware of the many different forms of control that were tried in order to remove the evils of liquor from the home and political life of the nation, but all were failures, and that prohibition was only a last resort. This was also the conclusion of Father Mathew after his extraordinary campaign for total abstinence, not only using moral suasion but likewise the offices and sacraments of the Church.

It is my thought that a great deal of the opposition to prohibition by Catholics is due to the erroneous impression cultivated by the liquor interests to save their business, that prohibition is a Protestant doctrine, or at least a Protestant institution, and I should add that many Protestants hold to this same belief.

Furthermore, we have had more "conversions" to our association this year than ever before, and just a few weeks ago the very well known Joseph Scott of Los Angeles presided at a meeting of the Allied Prohibition Forces in that city.

Our association does not solicit members, nor do we ask for funds, and while I have been prominent in the leadership of many Catholic activities I have never seen so much voluntary participation as well as voluntary contributions.

There are many Catholics in the rural districts who resent being included with that group that is anxious to bring liquor back again and to a lesser extent this feeling prevails in the cities as well.

THE COMMONWEAL has been helpful to us, as it has made it plain that Catholics can be for or against prohibition, as they themselves may conclude.

P. H. CALLAHAN, *Secretary,*
Association of Catholics Favoring Prohibition.

USURY AS A NEW ISSUE

Providence, R. I.

TO the Editor: Mr. Victor S. von Szeliski asks some pertinent questions for "no interest" advocates to answer. But, first of all, it is not presumed that interest can be abolished by any edict of government. It must be understood that money, as it represents productive wealth or capital, must always get its price in the form of interest. But what makes the price of anything, above its cost of production? This is determined by relative abundance.

There is so much surplus money in the banks now, which must represent so much surplus products, that industry cannot afford to borrow it all at the price demanded in the form of interest; because an increase in productive industry with the present overhead charge in the form of interest would increase the surplus.

The proper price for anything is the price at which it can be sold. The banks cannot sell their present holdings because they demand too high a price for interest. If money were "sold" at its proper market price it would all be utilized, and then industry would be active to the limit and there could be no general unemployment. It is conceivable that money, and its consequent real surplus of goods, would be equally abundant at a rate of interest as low as 2 percent. Then, in order for all industry to be employed, it would be necessary to reduce the rate of true interest to approximately zero. It is very probable that a general reduction of interest for long-time loans by only 1 per cent would bring employment to all at the present time, for it would transfer about $4,000,000,000 from the owners of capital to the workers or general consumers, which would no doubt be sufficient to take away the so-called surplus.

As a "no interest" advocate, in the sense of recognizing that in interest lies the solution of the world's economic problems, I submit the following answers to the questions which were propounded:

1. "Who will loan money for nothing, and if he won't, how compel him?"

Answer: We are considering true interest, which is approximately represented by the interest on government bonds. When government bonds approximated zero there would still be an opportunity to secure interest in the form of payment for the risk taken in financing industry. While such returns might be termed interest, they would be approximately at the rate of 2 percent as against the present rate of 6 percent, but would really contain as little true interest as though the loan were made to the government. So then the question resolves itself into, "Who will loan money for 2 per cent?" And if one won't loan at the market price, he can be compelled to only by his own self-interest. The offer of the market price for money will bring in new money, and any money withheld from the market will bring about inflation when it is spent, and such withheld money will thus lose some of the purchasing power that it would have if it did not force the issuing of new and additional money.

2 (a). "How can the functions of insurance companies and savings banks in providing income for those unable to engage in gainful occupations be continued?"

Answer: If the rate of interest is properly zero, the clients of insurance companies and savings banks ought to be satisfied with the preservation of their principal; they are not entitled to a bonus. If wealth were so distributed that there could be no interest, the insurance companies could do business on the basis of their experience tables and, just as now, some of their clients would receive more than they paid in and some would receive less than they paid in; and the savings banks might appropriately make a charge for safeguarding the money of their depositors, which was the practice in England even as late as the sixteenth century.

2 (b). "How about hospitals, schools and the like which depend on income from their endowment funds? Will they have to invest in common stocks?" . . . etc.

Answer: Without interest, the people generally would be able to pay for the services they received; such eleemonsynary institutions would be limited to ever-necessary charity work. The rest of the question has been answered above.

3 (a). "How can banks earn any money to pay their employees?"

Answer: Out of the charge of 2 percent. They now make their profit out of the difference between 4 and 6 percent.

3 (b). "Who will deposit his money in the bank with the certain knowledge that the bank management is bound to lose on some of the loans it makes and cannot earn money on its assets to balance these losses?"

Answer: The banks now more or less successfully perform this feat on the margin of 2 percent, which is not interest but payment for risk.

4. "How can rampant inflation, such as threatened the United States in 1920, be stopped?"

Answer: Stop financing the world in the form of foreign investments, with high interest rates, and selling our goods abroad for gold, which actions leave less goods for American consumption, with more money to buy the lessened quantity of goods available to those who produced them. Investment abroad and the excessive development of a country by immigration are the causes of true interest.

M. P. CONNERY.

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PLAINCHANT AND BEETHOVEN

Fontana, Calif.

TO the Editor: Father Ryan's article on "Plainchant and Beethoven," though a trifle technical in part, was an enlightening and ingenious explanation of the joyous melancholy which dominates so much of Beethoven. However, Father Ryan's division of music into "absolute" and "program" is very debatable. There is much of music, old and modern, which cannot slip into either of these categories very comfortably. At any rate I admire the writer's confidence in these dual pigeonholes for all music, and the arguments (speculative though they seem) which back his division.

I think Father Ryan has overlooked what to me seems the raison d'être of most of the profound sadness and savage glee which marks Beethoven's work, namely, his deafness. At the young age of thirty, this Titan of musicians and composers was looking forward to the prospect of being unable to hear a note. For me, the key-note to his character and music lies in some words which he penned at the time: "I will, as far as possible, defy my fate, though there must be moments when I shall be the most miserable of God's creatures. Not unhappy, no; that I could never endure. I will grapple with fate; it shall never drag me down." Here we have the mood of the "Sonata Appassionata," that most eloquent of human utterances. It was Beethoven's continuous hurling of the gauntlet at fate, his persistent denial of its ability to hurt him which, I think, gave that strange "essence of all suffering, which is joy," to his work.

CHRISTINE GAZVODA.

IRELAND AND THE CONGRESS

St. Louis, Mo.

TO the Editor: Ireland was never so united as at the present time. Political lines may determine certain territories, but the heart and faith of Ireland make her one and inseparable forever. This has been brought about, not by statesmen or stratagem, but her own self-consciousness of nationhood and her ancient faith. All Ireland is preparing to celebrate next June two great events—the fifteenth centenary of the coming of Patrick and the International Eucharistic Congress. Splendid plans for these two events—blended into a national act of faith—are now in such advanced progress that their unfolding will surprise the world. All departments of Irish life, civil and ecclesiastical, are joining intelligence and strength toward this objective.

Ireland's gratitude to her national apostle will be expressed in a great act of faith to Patrick's Divine Master, Christ, the Eucharistic King. Phoenix Park next June will become the world's largest cathedral, with the green fields of Ireland for its carpet, the lovely flowers of Ireland for its adornment, and the blue skies of Ireland for its dome. There will foregather a hosting of the Gael of more than a million souls, to unite in the papal legate's Mass, grateful to God and Saint Patrick for the faith of their fathers living still.

Dublin, the capitol city, expressing the heart of the nation, will be transformed into the roomiest sanctuary ever made ready for the Eucharistic Christ. For four full miles the streets of that fine old city will be made into a royal highway, resplendent in a riot of flowers, lights and color beauty, to greet the passing King. Along these four miles holy hymns will be sung in unison, synchronized by loud speakers the entire route.

The old land has been justly called "Ireland of the Welcomes," but in a finer sense shall this name be her signet, for she is to give a thousand Irish welcomes to the Divine Friend that has ever been her Viaticum in all the trials of her age-long story, and for Whose Gospel she was often in chains, hungry, broken and bleeding, but never disloyal. To the Mass, she was loyal in the past. For the Mass, her present priceless possession, she lifts a grateful heart.

To give full measure to her gratitude the kindly heart of Ireland feels inadequate. Therefore she, the motherland, is broadcasting a mother's crooning call to her world-wide and sea-divided children to come back to Erin next June-time and join her in giving glory to Saint Patrick and thanksgiving, laud and honor to her sempiternal King.

So, as by miracle, Ireland's youth is renewed, her unity restored, her ancient faith revivified, her old missionary zeal recaptured. Again shall be told the oft-told story of Ireland's world-mission, bequeathing to this latest age, as sunset to the skies, the glory of her prime. She youthfully lives on in the calm and proud possession of eternal things. How much, how very much, this tired, broken, bankrupt, old world needs Ireland's message, her spirit, her courage, her culture and her faith! Ireland has a vital place in the world of today!

RT. REV. P. P. CRANE, V.G.

MANY RIVERS

Minneapolis, Minn.

TO the Editor: In his delightful article "Many Rivers" Mr. Charles Phillips relates how Caesar "upon a raw and gusty day" swam the "coffee-colored" Tiber thrice, and he wonders how, under the circumstances, the noble Caesar got his clothes again. Mr. Phillips may be unaware that "upon a raw and gusty day" the honorable Julius failed to reach the other bank, for "ere we could arrive the point proposed, Caesar cried, 'Help me, Cassius, or I sink!'" And, too, the rash Caesar probably swam-like Cassius—"accoutered as [he] was."

DONALD WILLIAMS.

Moline, Ill.

TO the Editor: In THE COMMONWEAL of October 14, page 579, column 2, I read: "Reading, about that time, with boyish thrills 'Stanley in Africa,' I had somehow coupled the Mississippi with the wild far-away waters of the Zambesi." Stanley's discoveries were all connected with the Congo—and David Livingstone's with the Zambesi.

A litle further down: ". . . to Fater Zahm's . . . in the days when he wrote under the name of Mozansa." I wonder whether that is a mistake or a misprint. It should be: Mozans.

REV. J. B. CULEMANS.

THE ABBÉ LUGAN

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor: After reading Abbé Dimnet's very beautiful appreciation of the late Abbé Alphonse Lugan, I venture to add my tribute as a friend and admirer.

Abbé Lugan was a very remarkable type of priest, highly intellectual, with true and rare erudition, far-seeing, with a statesman's vision of the unfortunate mistakes in France and Spain. He never saw things as he wished to see them, he weighed them carefully, and if he found them wanting he was not afraid to speak out, courageous almost beyond prudence.

His shabby clothes and amusing cloak which served him for an umbrella in the rain, made one realize how little he cared for the goods of this world.

His loss is great because his type is rare.

ALICE E. WARREN.

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BOOKS

Days of Long Ago

Everyman Remembers, by Ernest Rhys. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation. $4.00.

Companions on the Trail, by Hamlin Garland. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.50.

COMPILATIONS of wise saws and ancient instances, garnered from friends most of whom are long since entombed, somehow have a faintly horrible texture. It is as if a host of wraiths spoke through their medium at a strangely whimsical séance, where their sayings are limited to one or two arbitrarily chosen dicta for which they are powerless to substitute something more witty or intelligent. The memorialist simply puts them down as personal adjuncts to his own periphery, and against the possible injustice of this procedure they cannot fend with even a threat of libel. There are probably only two ways in which such books can be written decently: either the author will veil himself so discreetly that his record gives no hint of the unearned superiority of his own vantage-point, or he will frankly tell his own story and make only a decorative frieze of his remembered cronies.

The first method is employed by Mr. Rhys, whose sketches of the important human scenery he was privileged to see during a crowded lifetime almost has the reverent objectivity of mediaeval sculpture. His memories range from William Morris to H. G. Wells, with some especially vivid remembrances of American poets and thinkers. Each figure is neatly niched with some characteristic, just as Tilmann Riemenschneider's saints all have their insignia. The total effect is a little like that produced by walking through a good museum, where minor canvases are perched beside great ones for the sake of historical clarity and continuity. Thus there are fine, slightly quaint sketches of Whitman and the youthful George Bernard Shaw, and a fine, full-length portrait of that grand old publisher, Joseph Malaby Dent, creator of Everyman's Library. The following impression of Walter Pater is so characteristic, and at the same time so valuable, that I cannot refrain from quoting it:

"I saw Pater only twice. Once at his lecture on Wordsworth (at Toynbee Hall I think it was). Once again, on a dark Sunday afternoon, in the Catholic church at Farm Street, where they were having some early Italian music. The church was very full, and we were seated in the southern aisle, all but shut off from the high altar, but commanding an impressive small side-chapel, when we saw pass to its inner rails, and devoutly kneel there like a faithful Catholic, a man in a close-cut overcoat. 'Why, it's Pater!' whispered Horne. He remained kneeling there through the whole of the Vespers, never lifting his head, and there he still was when we left the church."

The American reader is sure to notice in this really good book a singular absence of "wise-cracking." Evidently the literati of Mr. Rhys's time would hardly have qualified as staff contributors to the *New Yorker*. Nor is Mr. Garland's volume a handbook of this modern pastime. It belongs quite definitely to an older and somewhat simpler, stancher United States; and the author gets round the problem of resuscitation by frankly coming out for method number two and writing primarily about himself. The narrative of Mr. Garland's effort to pay for bread and butter by writing and lecturing, even while doing everything possible to foster the development of an American art-consciousness is a tale one hesitates to term inspiriting, lest that word be associated with some species of reprehensible drummerism. The plain fact of the matter is that his generation was active: it believed in the power of doing what one wanted and was, perhaps, insufficiently passive. But the robust health and the fine individualism here described are qualities we shall continue to miss while our own time lasts.

One is sometimes well-nigh amazed at the unconscious awareness of influences manifest in Mr. Garland's book. He who had written such devastating sketches of pioneer poverty, nevertheless noted in 1907: "Once I would have glorified the painter of the poor, but I'm not so sure that he is not as false in his way as our painters of Dutch and French peasants are in theirs. He sees down-and-outs in Washington Square every hour of the day, but are they worth painting? After all, they are not typical of American life nor are they lovely." If one had space to correlate this passage with a number of others, the representative truth would appear: Mr. Garland's America had become a nation which still thought of Americanism in terms of the self-reliant, erect, auto-propelling pioneer, but it had turned from the country to the city in its quest of the desirable life. Yet when it saw this city in the actual social concrete, it closed an eye and reverted to its pioneer image. This curious phenomenon, which may be traced in a hundred writers, seems the major psychical characteristic of the decade after 1900.

There is much interesting reminiscence in "Companions on the Trail"—sketches of Mark Twain, Roosevelt, Howells, Brander Matthews, Fuller and others. But undoubtedly the best part of the book from this point of view is devoted to the "trail"—to the vanishing Indian, the changing West, the whole, huge primitive universe of America. Mr. Garland was a man of his time, only rarely venturing ahead of it. That is possibly why his work seems so typical.

GEORGE N. SHUSTER.

Before the Finale

A World Can End, by Irina Skariatina (Mrs. Victor F. Blakeslee). New York: Jonathan Cape and Harrison Smith, Incorporated. $5.00.

UNFORTUNATELY the public begins to tire a little of Russia, which has been the subject of innumerable volumes recently published. But this most interesting and well-written book is far superior to all the others describing the life of the upper classes in pre-war Russia and the Russian Revolution, and more impressive even than the popular "Education of a Princess" by the Grand Duchess Marie. It deserves a wide reading public.

Irina Skariatina writes clearly, convincingly and without the least affectation. Her book is extraordinarily real. The careless, happy life of the Russian aristocracy has seldom been described more vividly; this vividness, I may add, proceeds seemingly from the writer's failure to see that that life was abnormal, reckless and inevitably doomed.

The first part of the memoirs revives many memories. There is something very sweet and sincere in it, and it gives an excellent idea of our childhood and education in that old realm of the czars which we believed would always endure. Her descriptions of country life are absolutely delightful, and charming reading not only for those bred in the same surroundings, but for others to whom the life is strange.

The second part, dealing with the Revolution, is of course much more important. I cannot believe, however, that this was originally written as a diary penned day by day, or saved in the miraculous manner described. It seems an impossibility, though I may be wrong. But the book would have been more impressive had this account been presented to us in the form of a description written from memory—a simple story of hard-

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ships endured, and of sufferings borne in silence and with fortitude.

In this diary are scenes which cause the reader to shiver or again to smile. There is the description of Polia, the hospital maid, who takes part in a meeting demanding the arrest of the matron and doctors, and then comes to warn them of what is about to happen. "They say the doctors and matron are enemies of the Revolution," she says "and just think, only yesterday the matron gave me a new dress!" An account of the performance given at the opera in honor of the political exiles returned from Siberia mentions Vera Figner: "I had always thought of her as being tall and beautiful, with great glowing eyes. . . . Instead of that here she was, just a little old lady very quiet, gentle and tired, oh so tired looking!" These are the little human touches and observations which give the book both interest and reality.

Other scenes are more tragic, such as the story of Irina Skariatina's journey down the Volga, when she was nearly thrown overboard by soldiers and sailors eager to destroy all the representatives of the old régime they could lay their hands upon. There is the description of divine service celebrated in the hospital where the author was nursing, while drunken Soviet soldiers were trying to force an entrance into its chapel. Distressing accounts are given of the difficulties in obtaining food. Stray dogs, taken half-famished into her home, she was compelled at last to have chloroformed. The account of imprisonment and the death of the old parents unable to resist the horrors of their changed existence is heart-rending. Almost every page contains something distressing, terrible or comical. It is life itself, life lived in stress, with few people great enough courageously to meet it.

The collapse of an entire social order, the transformation of social classes, the end of everything, is described within this volume, every line of which one feels is true. And the most wonderful thing in it, is that the writer has realized what few Russian exiles have, the tragic grandeur of the cataclysm.

CATHERINE RADZIWILL.

A Newman Anthology

The Fine Gold of Newman, by Joseph J. Reilly. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.50.

THE WAYS of culling excerpts are not unlike those of making tribal lays, of which, according to Kipling, there are some four and twenty, and every single one of them is right. In the present instance, that of Dr. Joseph J. Reilly and his "The Fine Gold of Newman," there is no question of that rightness.

The works of the great cardinal have occupied the attention of reflective minds now for almost a century; nevertheless, nothing comparable to Dr. Reilly's book has appeared. We have, it is true, the definitive edition, bearing the imprint of Messrs. Longmans and Green; scholarly editions of single works, notably those of Father O'Connell of Cincinnati; and gift editions galore. No one, however, except Dr. Reilly has undertaken to scan the whole body of Newman's prose for the purpose of gathering together into one volume representative selections from his most brilliant passages. Everybody knows the rare quality of the "Apologia" and the distinction of "The Idea of a University," and a few there are who perceive the perfection of "The Present Position of Catholics"; but how many, except perhaps the scholars among us, know the flavor of "Callista" and of "Loss and Gain," the fervor of "Discourses to Mixed Congregations," the impeccability of "Essays Critical and Historical" and of "Historical Sketches," or the utter clar-

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NEXT WEEK

THE NEW IRISH REVOLUTIONARIES, by Sean O'Faolain, most interestingly and clearly analyzes a state of affairs vividly suggested by the writer as follows: If in the period while the Free State was consolidating its position, "you asked an Irishman whether there was any fear of further 'trouble,' he would have laughed at you. If you ask the same question today he will at once assume a worried expression, and preface his remarks with, 'Well, *they* say,' . . . always a bad sign in Ireland." Enlisting the sympathies of some of the old revolutionaries, the new are working assiduously to institute in Ireland what would be in fact a Communistic régime. . . . CANADA CONQUERS UNEMPLOYMENT, by M. Grattan O'Leary, tells how our neighbor on the north is dealing effectively with unemployment with a program of public aid that is providing work that is substantially increasing the resources, or public wealth, of the nation. It is notable that this has been done with freedom from "party controversy and from political manipulation," and it may well cause one to wonder at the comparative merits of a system of charity that is organized only to avert actual disaster, without supplying creative employment. . . . AMERICAN INDIAN ARTISTS, by Rose Henderson, describes the excellent and distinguished work that is being done by American Indians in the fine arts, work that is receiving international recognition and is far above the relatively trifling "curios" that are associated in the general mind with Indian art. . . . THE QUEST OF IMMORTALITY, by M. W. Weston, is a glowing testimony of the search for conviction in the supernatural truths that, contrary to logic, are the special subjects of attack of those sceptics who say that we can know nothing about the things that are beyond the limits of our mortal life.

ity of half a dozen volumes more? To make known something of these qualities, to give impressions of the entire range of Newman's prose from the point of view of both style and idea, is the purpose of Dr. Reilly's work.

And that the purpose is accomplished goes without saying. The editor's knowledge of the Newman material is authoritative, demonstrated as such by his publication of "Newman as a Man of Letters"; and his taste as an editor requires no further establishment than an examination of his recent "Masters of Nineteenth Century Prose" provides. Hence, with such knowledge and such taste at command, he could have found his task arduous only because of the bulk of the material surveyed and because of the peculiar evenness of its excellence. This last characteristic, one can well imagine, raised no end of difficulties, for having to choose among so many possibilities must have led from one quandary into another. If, however, as a result of Dr. Reilly's choices, the reader recalls an occasional passage which he might wish to have had included, he must invariably discover another, which he would not be without.

The inclusions in almost every instance have been made from the point of view of the universal rather than the timely, and they are varied by the frequent introduction of aphorisms, many of which are entertaining as well as edifying, as the following may testify: "Society begins with the poet and ends with the policeman." "Not a man in Europe who talks bravely against the Church, but owes it to the Church that he can talk at all." "If you would have a literature of saints, you must first have a nation of them." "Many a man will live and die upon a dogma; no man will be a martyr to a conclusion." "The Romans deified law, as the Athenians deified the beautiful."

"The Fine Gold of Newman" is a splendid example of editorial taste. One might wish, however, that a topical sequence rather than a run-on arrangement had been followed in the format. Such fault, perhaps, if fault it be, can readily be overlooked, because of the excellence of the matter presented.

GEORGE CARVER.

Taste and Argument

The Brown Decades, by Lewis Mumford. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $3.00.

MR. LEWIS MUMFORD revives our faith in American criticism and renews our interest in the method and material of that criticism. The method, which one glimpses in the histories of Mr. Mark Sullivan, has a power of learning about it—a learning wholly removed from academies, and characterized by a kind of jaunty pedestrianism that comes from writing overmuch for the magazines. The material itself is only partially derived from books or other literary sources; much of it is three-dimensional, architectonic and of a sort that has not hitherto been recognized as the subject-matter of cultural assay. Mr. Mumford's "Brown Decades" is a free-hand volume of pioneering and exploration among the sunken galleries of late nineteenth-century Americana. It is stimulating, reportorial, evocative—and only mildly chargeable with tenuity and special pleading.

The main contention of "The Brown Decades" is closely interwoven with the thesis of Mr. Mumford's "Golden Day," in which he suggested that the beginnings of a literary culture were to be found in America just prior to the Civil War. In the present volume he declares that the Civil War not only destroyed those valuable literary beginnings, but in addition so atrophied the cultural sensibilities of Americans as to make them oblivious or indifferent to the development of the space arts.

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Between 1865 and 1895, American architecture, painting and sculpture were in the doldrums; bad taste (or as Mr. Mumford suggests, a muddy brown taste) was generally triumphant. Yet here and there a lone and powerful impetus was working for honesty and beauty. Olmsted, the designer of Central Park; Richardson, last of the great mason-architects; the giant Roeblings, builders of Brooklyn Bridge; and Thomas Eakins of whom Whitman said, "He is not an artist, he is a force"—these are some of the makers of that buried culture which Mr. Mumford now reveals to us as significant and fertile. Significant because it demonstrates the solid foundations on which the strongest and best of our art is built; fertile, because the vitality seeded in a Richardson, a Ryder or a Roebling flowers today in the painting, architecture and engineering of contemporary masters.

In uncovering the usable portions of an age that he has hitherto regarded as dead and uninspired, Mr. Mumford reveals his shrewd and creative critical gifts, and compels us to acknowledge that he has employed his material deftly and economically to advance his thesis. But it is possible to bear down too heavily on the necessarily fragile evidences of influences and indebtedness that he adduces in "The Brown Decades." Cognizant of this danger, Mr. Mumford skilfully avoids a too dogmatic linkage of the two ages, yet one cannot help feeling that he should, in many instances, have avoided it altogether. The relationship between Albert Ryder and John Marin, for example, might more successfully have been suggested than described. To this reviewer at least, it appears that Marin's preoccupation with the detached and aesthetic possibilities of paint is more closely akin to Cézanne than to Ryder; furthermore, I believe that the entire modern school of American painting is vastly more French than American. Generally speaking, Mr. Mumford appears not to be so inevitably at home with the space arts as with literature. The result is that "The Brown Decades" is noticeably inferior, hastier and less permeated by its own critical juice than "The Golden Day." A trifle less journalism and a more rigorous synthesizing of this fascinating material are the sincere suggestions that a sympathetic reviewer extends to the most stimulating of contemporary critics.

HENRY MORTON ROBINSON.

Raleigh of England

Sir Walter Raleigh, That Damned Upstart, by Donald Barr Chidsey. New York: The John Day Company. $3.75.

MR. CHIDSEY is quite right in asserting that "a life of Walter Raleigh inevitably is a history of England in Raleigh's time, for the man had something to do with practically every event of importance, social, military, naval or political, while he was at court." He was even something of a poet and historian himself, and the only activity with which it seems impossible to connect him was the exuberant flowering of Elizabethan and Jacobean drama. But it is unsavory history in spite of its swashbuckling.

Raleigh, "that damned upstart," was born about 1552 of an ancient but not noble family recently affiliated with the Protestant cause. He was a half-brother of the ruthless Humphrey Gilbert whose cruelty as governor of Munster has never been forgotten, and after some fighting with the Huguenots in France and an unsuccessful attempt at raiding—or was it settling?—in America, young Captain Raleigh was himself dispatched to Ireland where he developed a policy which Mr. Chidsey thinks had "at least the merit of simplicity." This was the notorious "undertaker plan" to "kill all the Irishmen and put Englishmen in their place." The story of the official butchery which Raleigh

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actually helped to perpetrate, and later—when he had secured Elizabeth's favor and become "his age's Brummel"—perpetuated as a governing principle, is one of the ugliest pages of his record.

More exhilarating is the tale of his quenchless enthusiasm for America, his repeated attempts to colonize there, and the fact that in between many fruitless and far from stainless efforts to wrest various South American ports from Spain, he did actually found the first British settlement—Virginia—in the New World. Apparently his tactics were also largely responsible for the epochal defeat of the Spanish Armada: and it is one of the ironies of history that when Raleigh fell from favor after James's accession, he was imprisoned in the Tower for hypothetical complicity in a hypothetical plot to conspire with King Philip and the English Catholics in making Arabella Stuart Elizabeth's successor on the throne. This real or imaginary "treason" was eventually condoned, however; and by another ironical turn it was Sir Walter's final effort to raid in Spanish Guiana which brought him to the scaffold.

Raleigh was a typical son of the English Renaissance—one of a large group at once brave and brilliant, cruel and unscrupulous, who lived with gusto and died with dignity. And Mr. Chidsey has written a dashing biography of a dashing personality. He has written it with the vigor and vividness of a capable young journalist, and with the defects of his qualities. For instance, if the somewhat lengthy bibliography of his references had included Lingard and Belloc and at least one reputable history of Ireland, he might have escaped that callousness toward Elizabethan persecution of Catholics, and that general contempt for all things Irish, which disfigure many of his pages.

KATHERINE BRÉGY.

Far Away

Twelve Secrets of the Caucasus, by Essad-Bey. New York: The Viking Press. $3.00.

IN THE Caucasus, say Caucasians, the nations began, and began a second time after the flood. The greatest archaeological discoveries now possible, says Essad-Bey, will be made in Georgia, anciently Medea, discoveries on the scale of the Egyptian and Syrian finds. But for the present, the stories which he brings from the unknown land are perhaps as strange as anything the archaeologists may dig up. There are several hundred small tribes in the valleys of the Caucasus, and their languages are as far apart as German and Chinese. Ethnological and cultural differences are also strongly marked. Some of the tribes are perfectly feudal; some perfectly democratic. Nothing is known of their origins, and the investigator comes up against irreconcilable contradictions. For instance, the Khevsurians might be thought to descend from the Crusaders, since they wear the Maltese Cross on their shirts, dress for war in ancient mail bearing Latin inscriptions, and worship Saint George; but unfortunately their temples contain only two objects of devotion, to wit, barrels of beer, and the pails in which the beer is brewed.

The heroes of the Caucasus are the robber-knights. Poor men are men who have no relatives. Wise men are honored. Poets are loved, and allowed to set their own fees. When slavery was abolished there, it was the masters who gave thanks, the slaves who protested. The Caucasians, it should be apparent from this, are neither European nor Asiatic. "A special race of men that will endure," says Essad-Bey. Certainly they deserve to, but what Essad-Bey says of the presence of gold in the mountains, of undiscovered diamond fields and springs of oil, does not promise well. Now or later an acre of diamonds would be exceedingly helpful to the U.S.S.R.

VINCENT ENGELS.

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Briefer Mention

The Macadam Trail, by Mary Day Winn; illustrated by E. H. Suydam. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $5.00.

PRIDE in our far-flung and diverse country is something which has been spuriously cultivated to such an extent, that a legitimate annal of the glories that are the Middle West and the grandeurs that are California, is apt to be looked upon as only another well-intentioned boost. And to speak of being deeply stirred by such an annal no doubt may be under the suspicion of being wishful, rather than well-grounded enthusiasm. Yet this book, in spite of its uninspiring title, does arouse pride and enthusiasm and may be recommended for the enjoyment of those who will read the book and judge it on the strength of its fairness to scenes, peoples and story with which they are familiar. It is a record of travel for 10,000 miles through thirty-four states of the union and abounds with observation of the true diversity of our country and with amusing and serious anecdotes of places and persons. The many illustrations by Mr. Suydam, who may be remembered for his illustrations of Lyle Saxon's books centering about New Orleans and the bayou country, richly contribute to the worth and the delightfulness of the volume.

Legendary France, by Regina Jais. New York: The Dial Press. $2.50.

THIS sprightly, colorful—and yet richly informative—book of travel by the author of "Legendary Germany" offers a splendid solution for the would-be traveler who is constrained by present circumstances beyond his control. For fancy-traveling while the physical creature remains at home, it is a sure delight. It is truly transporting, and affords not only a word picture glance at the outside of things, but also an entrance to the inside of French life and institutions: life at home in a château, an intimate afternoon visit to Ravel's charming and modest house, and endless other such experiences which could be enjoyed only by the exceptionally leisured and cosmopolitan person. As the title indicates, there is due observance in the book to the rich matrix of local history which is as essentially a part of the old world scenes as the enduring monuments, cities and hamlets, and castellated ruins. For the fortunate person who is going to France, it is an excellent guide-book.

Lesby, by Elizabeth Willis. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.00.

THIS story of a Canadian farm, though it ends in a tragic death, is not a tragedy so much as an idyll. The study of the attraction of two very different sisters for the same man, and of his emotional confusion between them, while perfectly credible, is never pressed to the point of the extreme suffering possible in such a situation. Much more vividly felt is the quality of decency and devotion which remains to these people in spite of everything. The chief dramatic achievement of the story is the real sense it communicates of the contrast between the two attractive types represented by Anne and Lesby—the tender, too sensitive sister and the powerful, beautiful young Amazon who is like a clean spirit of earth. Lesby, indeed, is a genuine creation, who would have warranted completer portrayal in a longer novel. There is an admirable naturalness in the painting of farm life as lived by bred-in-the-bone countrymen, with its almost inhuman effort, its wordless attachments and rooted content.

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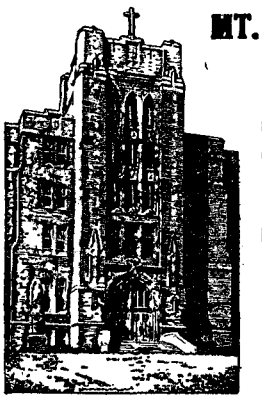

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The Dream of Fair Women, by Henry Williamson. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, Incorporated. $2.50.

NO DOUBT legions of young men have dreamed of going off to a cottage by the sea and living very lonely and poetically. This is the inception of Mr. Williamson's story. The pursuant observations of nature are extraordinarily minute and sensitive, but are nearly all confounded with the sentimental vague melancholy of the idle and useles observer. Of Willie Maddison, the hero, Mr. Williamson says in a postcript, "His thought and utterances were peculiarly directed against those ideas which he believed to despoil human life." The theme, then, is of a supersensitive and unsocial aesthete seeking refuge in nature and thinking how uncommonly finer he is than the rest of mankind. Into the sylvan refuge floats a dark-eyed, nymph-like young lady. Here the sentiment gets so thick it is almost embarrassing to read it. It is an adolescent dream aggravated and sustained. The young hero returning into the world, runs against all those things which he believes despoil human life, the fact that the young lady is married, that he likes her husband and the husband is very kind to him, and that the young lady who seemed so natural with her affections when he had her alone to himself, is in fact simply promiscuous and surrounds herself with young men. All this is laid against a scene of the greatest disorder and extravagance in post-war England. It makes the phrase "post-war hysteria" very real. The best that can be said for the book is that its acute sentimentality is earnest. Incidentally this is a rewritten first novel. It is hardly news to add that Mr. Williamson matured into an artist distinguished for fine observations of nature.

God in Christian Experience, by W. R. Matthews. New York: Harper and Brothers. $3.00.

AS THE title might imply, this book is an appeal to experience rather than to authority. It is intended to meet the demand of those who are no longer satisfied with the authority of either Church or Bible. Undoubtedly such persons exist in great numbers—among them many who grew up as Catholics—and there is profound need of an approach that will be convincing to them. But the present volume unfortunately does not seem to measure up to this very laudable purpose. One doubts if those Catholics who have been bitten by unbelief would be brought back through these pages. Yet the book may well serve to call the attention of our writers to the need of studying the psychology of those who cannot be reached by the more traditional dissertations.

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